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No. 396

"WON'T YOU LET MY PAPA WORK?"

BY MARCO O. HOLFER.

[A touching incident occurred in a Western city during the great strike. A little girl, the daughter of a discharged employee of one of the leading railroads, went to the office of the superintendent, and, in piteous tones, told a tale of suffering, destitution and death, and besought him to reinstate her father in his former position with an increase of wages.—Paper.]

I'm only just a workman's child—
I hope I don't intrude;
I came in here to talk to you.
But yet I'll not be rude.
I know the men have stopped the work—
It is a strike, they say—
But papa could not see us want,
Oh, won't you raise the pay?
Oh, won't you let my papa work?
And won't you pay him more?
Although you'd never miss the sum,
He'd bless you o'er and o'er!
I see that you are angry, sir;
Your look is cold and stern.
You surely would not turn him off—
He has our bread to earn!
The Lord has placed us in his care,
And he'd work every day
For just enough to buy our food!
Oh, won't you raise his pay?
You could not chide a drowning man
For catching at a straw;
How can you blame a starving man
For breaking o'er the law?
My papa sits in silent woe,
And maments cried to-day,
Because she had no food for us!
Oh, won't you raise the pay?
In Heaven there's a God, I know,
That pities all the poor
And writes dark charges on his book
Against the evil-doer
Who thinks a laborer's not a man;
I'm sure its leaves display
With precious names of those
Who have put down the pay!
Don't tell me to be gone from here,
'Cause you are busy now;
I've something more I wish to say,
If you will please allow
We haven't anything to eat,
And—baby died to-day!
He'll speak a word to God for you,
If you will raise the pay!
I'm sure that you have got a wife
And little children too.
My papa loves us just as well
As yours are loved by you!
The wages of all sin is death,
The Holy Book does say;
And if you sin against the poor,
The Lord will raise your pay!
Oh, won't you let my papa work?
And won't you pay him more?
Although you'd never miss the sum,
He'd bless you o'er and o'er!

The Scarlet Captain:

OR,

The Prisoner of the Tower.
A STORY OF HEROISM.

BY COL. DELLE SARA,

AUTHOR OF "THE CAPTAIN OF THE LEGION,"
"THE PRIDE OF BAYOU SARA," "SILVER
SAM," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BOAT IN THE OFFING.

DOWN—down! a hundred feet at least.
A fearful descent and one that few mortals
could make to make.

But were the two adventurers unharmed?
Had they boldly leaped into the sea to escape
from their determined and ruthless pursuers,
or had the shots of the Turkish muskets taken
effect?

Would the blue waters of the Adriatic—so
famed in story and in song—receive into its
close embrace living men, full of resolution,
ready to do and dare, or bleeding, mangled
forms, bereft of life's vital spark by the fatal
lead of the Moslem muskets?

That was the question which agitated the
minds of the renegade and his followers.
Eagerly they rushed to the ramparts and
climbing upon the overhanging buttresses gazed
down into the dark gulf beneath.

The air of the night was chill, the wind cir-
cling with many a mournful sound amid the
branches of the trees on the near hillside, and
the ever-moving waters of the famed old sea,
chafing restlessly against the weather-beaten
rocks of the tower, sang a low, wild song, full
to the top of many a strange note.

And was the murmur of the tide the requiem
for the dead—the wail of sorrow for the rash
men who had found a grave within its bosom,
or was it the pean of triumph for the daring
hearts who had risked life and all by trusting
to old step-mother ocean, and by the venture
at one bound had clutched success?

The night was so dark—the light of the moon
so feeble—that little could be discerned, as the
turbaned host looked down into a misty space
where neither life nor death appeared. Nothing
but the ceaseless song of the murmuring
waves or the shrill scream of the night birds
disturbed from their nests in the cavities of the
old tower-wall by the flashes of the torches, the
clang of arms and the fierce oaths of the wild
soldiery.

"Hark!" cried Hassan, perched upon the
wall, a torch in his hand, and gazing earnestly
down into the dark gulf beneath; "was not
that a yell of pain?"

"A bird-cry," answered the renegade, his
ever dark face darker than usual at the un-
toward results of his carefully-planned schemes.
"I am sure that they were hit!" Hassan cried,



High up on a beetling crag, two men watched the Turkish host entangled in the mountain defiles.

evidently not willing to believe that the two
bold blades could have escaped.

"Yes, yes!" a dozen voices cried in chorus,
"they were hit!"

"Oh, yes," Hassan continued, "I saw the
tall fellow with the scarlet jacket stagger; he
did not leap, he fell from the tower."

"Who knows what is beneath—water or
rocks?" the renegade demanded.

"Water—twenty fathoms at the least," re-
plied the old warder of the tower, who chanced
to be one of the throng.

"And if a man leaped unhurt from the tower
what are the chances of his escaping?" ques-
tioned the renegade.

The warder shook his head.

"It is a fearful leap," he replied, evidently
in doubt.

"And the result would be certain death,
would it not, whether the man was unhurt or
not before he leaped?" Hassan asked. In his
own mind the Turk was fully satisfied that
both of the adventurers had gone to their long
home.

"By Allah! I cannot tell!" responded the
warder. "No man ever yet made the at-
tempt."

"And if they reached the water unhurt,
how far must they swim before they can make
a landing on the shore?" Ismail Bey asked. He
was just as positive that the two adventurers
had escaped the bullets of his followers as they
were positive to the contrary.

"Two hundred feet, go they either way,"
the old man replied.

"We lose time, then, dallying here!" the
stern Moslem chief cried. "Away at once to
the shore! Hassan, go you to the south while
I'll to the north. A hundred gold pieces to
the man who discovers the Montenegro!"

The false son of the noble old mountain race
had jumped at once to the nativity of the man
who had, at such an untimely hour, wedded
Scutari's countess.

Away then, on the instant, the troopers hur-
ried. With hasty steps they raced down the
massive stair-case and out through the great
stone portals.

Outside the tower the party divided, one
squad sped away to the south, the other to the
north, and both came to the water's edge just
by the ends of the fortress.

The torches flared along the shore and the
reflections danced far out on the crest of the
waves, but fruitless was the search; no trace
of either of the two adventurers could be dis-
covered.

"To-morrow the sea will wash their bodies
up on the shore," one of the Turkish officers
suggested.

A dark look came over the renegade's face,
but he said nothing. It was plain that he was
puzzled and was not fully satisfied that the
daring man who had come between him and
his cherished plans had found a grave in the
waters of the Adriatic.

It was a mystery to the wily renegade how
the marriage had been arranged, but he believed
the Montenegro to be some lover of the
countess who had followed his mistress and had
arrived just in time to be of service to her.

Still looking around intently, the quick eyes
of the false Montenegro perceived a tiny
white speck afar off in the gloom, dancing
upon the bosom of the wave.

"What is that?" he cried: "is it a boat un-
der sail, or do my eyes deceive me?"

"It is a boat, your excellency," answered
one of the officers—"a fishing craft, probably,
beating into a harbor."

"To me she seems as if she were standing
out to sea," Ismail Bey observed, after a long,
steady gaze.

"It may be so—it is so, I think," the other
assented.

"No need to look further!" the Turkish leader
exclaimed. "The men we seek are in yonder
boat. She was passing near to the tower when
they leaped from it; she picked them up, and
now they seek safety in flight."

But not one of the group coincided with the
renegade in this opinion, although none chose
to say so.

One and all, the general excepted, fully and
firmly believed that the two men had found a
grave beneath the swelling waters.

Hassan and his party came up.

"Well!" the renegade demanded in his ab-
surd, stern way, although it was hardly neces-
sary for him to put the question, for he plainly
read failure in the face of his officer.

"Nothing, your excellency, no trace at all."

"Did you observe a fishing-boat standing out
from the land?"

"Yes, your excellency."

"It is a hundred chances to one that our men
are on board of that boat."

Hassan looked incredulous.

"In the morning search the coast up and
down for twenty miles at least and find the
captain who sails yonder boat. Have a placard
issued offering a reward of a hundred pieces
of gold for information which will lead to the
capture of either one of these two men."

The renegade beckoned the Turk apart.

"Call a council of my chief officers here in
the tower at twelve to-night; there is mischief
afoot, I fear. We have lost the Scutari dis-
trict, and we must strike a severe blow at once
or else we will have the Scutari men-at-arms
on the Montenegrin side; but if we can suc-
ceed in dispersing this Montenegrin force in the
Duga pass, we may at least hold Scutari
neutral."

Hassan proceeded at once upon his mission
and the renegade entered the tower.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RENEGADE'S PLAN.

STRAIGHT to the apartment of the countess
the renegade proceeded. He entered without
ceremony and found the two ladies standing
by the great oval window looking out upon the
sea, anxiously peering down into the darkness
beneath.

Catherine, with all her haughty pride, had
felt concerned for the safety of the man who
had so boldly thrust his head into the lion's
mouth for her sweet sake.

Quick in wit, as women naturally are, she
had dispatched the old priest to learn how the
fray had ended, and the aged Ivan ascertained
without difficulty from the first Turkish soldier
whom he had encountered that the two adven-
turers had been chased to the roof of the old
tower and from the parapet, to escape the Mos-
lem bullets, had boldly leaped into the sea.

A fearful chance for life!

"Am I a widow then, almost as soon as
wedded?" the countess murmured, as she gazed
from the window of the old tower upon the
inky gulf beneath and listened to catch the
sound which would tell of a strong man's strug-
gle against grim death.

Afar up and down along the shore, beyond
the walls of the tower, she could see the torches
of the Turkish soldiery flaming out in the dark-
ness of the night, and every now and then to

her ears the free winds brought the sound of
the Moslem laugh and the sound of the Moslem
curse, but no trace of the gallant fellow who
had so freely risked his life for her sake.

The abrupt entrance of Ismail Bey turned
the attention of the two ladies from the scene
without to the fierce warrior within.

"The first trick in the game is thine, Cath-
erine!" the renegade said, "thanks to this med-
dling priest!" and he scowled at the affrighted
Father Ivan, who, good, honest soul, would not
wantonly have harmed the very worm crawling
in the dust beneath his feet.

"All the blame is mine!" cried Catherine,
spiritedly. "He but obeyed my orders, and
under compulsion, too."

"You are a married woman and have saved
your lands," the renegade confessed.

"Yes; and now that you have failed in your
purpose, I trust that you will throw open the
gates of this tower and let us go free."

"Not so fast," the false Montenegro re-
plied, a dark smile upon his bronzed face.

"The knot that yonder trembling priest has
tied with book and prayer, I, with the edge of
my saber, have severed. You have been a wife,
but now my hand has widowed you."

"My husband is dead?"

"Yes."

"Oh, no!" and a proud smile curled Cath-
erine's superb lip.

The renegade looked annoyed; he had not for
an instant imagined that the countess under-
stood how matters had gone.

"Your husband is dead. Why do you imply
a doubt?"

"Because it exists," the countess replied,
promptly. "To save himself from your bullets
the Scarlet Captain and his companion leaped
into the sea."

"And there perished!" interrupted the officer.

"Be not so sure of that!" retorted the countess.

"Yonder fishing-boat, now standing out
to sea, was but a short time ago running close
beneath the walls of the tower. The chances
are more than even that, instead of finding a
grave under the surface of the tide, the two
men, who so boldly dared your anger, are safe
in the fishing-boat."

He did not attempt to argue the point, but
one thing the officer desired to ascertain—who
was the fellow whose unexpected presence in
the old tower had so completely baffled his deep-
laid plan.

"Who is this man, who, for your sake, has
so boldly risked his life?"

"I named him but now—the Scarlet Cap-
tain."

"The Scarlet Captain?"

"So he is called."

"A fanciful title, truly; but, what else; has
he no other name?"

"None that I am aware of."

The Turkish general knitted his black brows;
he fancied that he was being deceived.

lands. This man came—a perfect stranger to
me, and when I questioned him as to his name,
and he replied that he was called the Scarlet
Captain, I was content. He accepted the terms
I imposed; a husband I must have, and he an-
swered the purpose. No lover of mine, though
—nothing but a tool which I condescended to
use in the dire emergency wherein your craft
had placed me."

Ismail Bey saw that the lady spoke but the
truth and his bold heart admired the daring
which had seized upon the sole chance to de-
feat the plan which would have wrested her
lands from her.

In truth it was a brave heart that Catherine
of Scutari carried within her woman's breast.
"And now that your scheme is set at naught
will you bid the gates of this tower open that
I may pass freely to my home?" the lady de-
manded.

Again the sinister smile on the face of the
renegade.

"I said the first trick was yours," he replied,
"but the second and the game, upon which
your fortunes are staked, I intend to win."

Fire flashed from the brilliant eyes of the
countess, but with a great effort she restrained
her anger.

"I do not understand," she said, coldly;
"please explain."

"You have been married; the chances are
that you are now a widow; you are here, in
my hands, helpless, a prisoner. If your hus-
band—this nameless adventurer, this Scarlet
Captain—is alive, if he has escaped alive the
bullets of my soldiers and the waters of the
Adriatic, his death is only a question of time,
for I shall hunt him down as steadily as the
ravaging wolves chase the stricken deer. When
he is dead, you will be quite free to marry
again, and the next time I will take care that
no interloper takes my place."

"This is terrible!" cried the countess, in heat;
"you will not dare!"

"Oh, will I not? Wait and see! John Belins,
the outcast Montenegrin, has dared many
things in crossing the gulf which lay between
the penniless, friendless lad, driven from his
home and kin, and the Governor of Albania,
Ismail Bey. This bold adventurer, who has
dared to cross my will, is doubtless one of the
Montenegrin leaders of the force now holding
the Pass of Duga. Within three days I'll cut
a way through the pass and send this rabble,
which calls itself an army, howling to their
mountain homes. With a heel of iron I'll
stamp Montenegro to the dust and make these
stubborn mountaineers curse the hour when
they were rash enough to brave the power of
their master, the Turkish Sultan, and bring
upon them the mailed hand of stern-faced
war."

"The Turk has never yet subdued the free
mountaineers of Montenegro," Catherine an-
swered spiritedly; "and Russia will never stand
tamely by and see a Christian people trampled
beneath the feet of the Moslem."

"Wait and see; but whether Montenegro suc-
ceeds or fails, you at least shall not escape me.
I will keep you safely here until I either ascer-
tain that this bold adventurer is dead, or else
succeed in capturing him, in which case, I'll
shoot him on the instant. Then you will be
free to accept my suit. It is long years, Cath-
erine, since your father drove me from his door
because I dared to lift my eyes to you, but the
memory of the wrong is as fresh as though it
happened only yesterday. This whilgig of
time has brought me my revenge, and by my
soul I swear that nothing on this earth has
power to turn me from my purpose. Your
face made me false to my country—drove me
forth an outcast, and now only your sweet self
can atone for the past. Let no vain hope of
escape delude you; the tower is well guarded
and every precaution taken. To-morrow I
march against the insurgents, and when I re-
turn, Catherine, you shall be mine!"

And then the renegade withdrew from the
apartment, leaving behind him consternation,
but not despair.

CHAPTER X.

THE ADVANCE.

At midnight in the old tower the council of
war was held.

The advent of the commander-in-chief had
been expected for some time, and, consequently,
all was in readiness for an advance in force the
moment he arrived and gave the word.

An army of some ten thousand men the Turks
had collected in the territory adjacent to the
old tower; an army of observation, merely, it
was said, but the sturdy mountaineers knew
better. They fully understood that when the
hour was ripe the Moslem host would sweep
through the defiles of Montenegro with all the
fury of the mountain avalanche, leaving naught
but death and destruction in their track.

Well commanded, too, were the Turkish
forces.

No better man in all the sultan's dominions
than Mukhtar Pasha, the second in command,
and as a cavalry leader all Europe held few
abler warriors than dashing Osman Pasha, the
wild commander of the wild Bashis Bazarouks;
and as for the chief of the army, the dark-
browed, stern-willed renegade, evil-eyed Ismail
Bey, the Persian armies, who had often fed be-
fore the edge of his flashing saber, could many
a tale of his daring courage and excellent
generalship relate; and the gray-coated Russians,
too, during the Crimean struggle, learned to
dread the Turkish general who seemed to bear
a charmed life and fought with the courage of
despair.

The Montenegreans, ever on the alert—in their
watchful nature like to the eagles of their own

native mountains—had not been idle while the Turkish host lay at Dulcigno; like the rolling ball of snow, it grew larger and larger.

Warlike news travels with a fleet foot, and within three days after the first squadron of Bashli Bazuks rode by the old dark tower and went into camp in the forest bordering on the sea which commanded the high road to the north, not a lonely village amid the Montenegrin mountains, perched like eagles' nests amid the hills of pine, but knew that the insolent Turk threatened their own free, native land, and that warriors were needed.

Descendants of the warlike Greeks of old, a nation of shepherd warriors, to throw aside the peaceful tools of agriculture and seize the weapons of war, was but as a second nature. And so, rushing down from their mountain fastnesses as the wild torrents pour after the thunder lowers and the lightning flash, the bold and hardy mountaineers seized upon the Pass of Duga, the natural avenue to the Montenegrin land. As to the number of these wild warriors even the well-trained Turkish spies were at fault. One reported a thousand men; another, five thousand.

Little wonder that the wily renegade, perplexed by the conflicting accounts, sought to flank the strong position occupied by the Montenegrin army, rather than attempt to force a passage through the Pass.

And the Montenegrin general—the skillful student in the art of war who had had the wit to seize a position so strong with his weak force that Ismail Bey, with ten thousand veteran troops at his back, hesitated to attempt to force a way through the Pass—who was he?

It Madam Rumor lied about the number of the Christian host, lied she still more recklessly and wildly in regard to the name of the man who, by his first move on the great chess-board of war, had caused skillful Ismail Bey to knit his brows, pull his beard, curse the chance and wonder how he could give a Roland for the Oliver so adroitly tendered.

Nicholas, Prince of Montenegro, was the lineal ruler over the mountain land, but Nicholas was a boy, so termed by the Turkish veterans, one who had

Never set a squadron in the field
Nor the decision of a battle knew more than a spinster.

And was he, fresh from finishing his education in la belle Paris, gayest city of the old Eastern world, the man to leap at once into the saddle of command—the seat of generalship—and with one single move set at naught the skill of the able Turkish generals?

Oh, no! such an idea was utterly absurd! The Montenegrin prince, full of French polish, the rough mountaineer lacquered over by the civilization of the wickedest city in all the world, might do well enough to figure in a court-suit and perform the stately ceremonies of power, but to grasp the war-horse's rein, lead men to battle, join the fray where cracked crowns and bloody wounds were to be got and given—no, not he!

The great Russian bear was at the bottom of the mystery.

As perfidious Albion, crafty-trading England had lent Hobart Pasha to the Turks, and so strengthened the Moslem navy with a little Anglo-Saxon oak, so the far-seeing, far-reaching Russian, his eye on Constantinople, his paw on the Black Sea, had lent some white-headed, sage old general—some Damskroski or Wiskeranoff, grown gray in service beneath the Russian eagles, to head the Montenegrin army.

And then another flying—and lying, perchance—report! The Montenegrin general was a mountaineer born, but who had been educated in the Russian service expressly for such an emergency.

But, be there truth or falsehood in these reports, there was no denying that the first action of the Montenegrin commander had caused the able Turkish generals to put on their thinking-caps.

Oflan Agan, who, as a cavalry commander, stood second to no captain in the Turkish service, despite his blundering ways, had been assigned to the task of discovering some avenue to turn the Montenegrin position.

The Irishman, good judge of human nature, searched carefully until he found a fellow who he thought could be trusted, provided he was paid well enough.

From this man, a native of the soil, by occupation a shepherd, the Bashli-Bazouk officer ascertained that there was a lonely footpath over the mountain through which the Pass of Duga led.

With two companions, following-pieces in hand, in disguise, and apparently on sport intent, the Irishman explored the lonely way.

He found the words of the shepherd true in every particular.

Up and over and through the beetling crags the path ran, and finally debouched into the level plain a short half-mile north of the northern end of the Duga Pass.

To transport artillery over the mountain by means of the obscure path was impossible, but a regiment of men or a squadron of horse could easily travel the steep and uncertain way.

Here then was an easy solution of the problem which had perplexed the Turkish commanders.

While a few thousand men engaged the attention of the Montenegrins in the Pass, a strong column could, by means of the mountain road, be thrown abruptly on the rear of the Christian position.

Of course, this movement accomplished, the total destruction of the Montenegrin army must follow.

At one o'clock the council separated, and with the daylight, the Turkish column, the renegade in command, plunged into the defile and commenced the flank movement, while Mukhtar Pasha prepared to amuse the mountaineers by a sham attack in their front.

High up on a beetling crag, concealed amid the sturdy pines, two men watched the Turkish host entangled in the mountain defiles.

"God is great!" cried the Scarlet Captain, for one of the men was he. "You army is delivered, helpless, into my hands!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 394.)

"Our boy Swipes," says a California paper, "is a regular attendant at Sunday school. Last Sunday his teacher was explaining a chapter to the class in the Book of Kings. After delivering herself of what she thought to be a very entertaining discourse, she asked the class, 'What is a king?' This was a poser to the class. Finally our boy Swipes, who is the pride of the Sunday school, held up his hand. This made his teacher smile benignly, for she was proud to see him so ready with an answer; so she said, 'Well, Swipes, what is a king?' 'Well, miss, you see, when you get in the king row and put a checker on him, why then he's a king; and when somebody leads jack, and another fellow plays a queen on pedro, you can make his eyes hang out by taking 'em both with a king.'"

MY MOUNTAINS.

BY J. L. STODDARD.

I watch them, as the king of day retires,
Like royal courtiers hold his purple train.
Their glittering suns tipped with golden fires,
Their bases darkening in the gloom-vrapt plain.

Yon lustrous peak whose pinnacles o'erleap
Its giant brothers, is to me Mont Blanc;
Those tiny cinderisles struggling o'er the steep
Are hazy travelers on its mighty flank.

Such have I seen it from the Alpine vale,
In whose warm lap the frosty glaciers melt—
Strange that this radiant mist, so soon to pale,
Can thus recall the thrill by Leman felt!

That tapering cone, o'er whose resplendent brow
A floating wreath of roseate vapor curls,
Is Vulcan's deeded mount, which oft as now
O'er Naples' peaceful bay its plume unfurls.

And this, the fairest, on whose spotless shewn
The sun's last beams with trembled ardor rest,
Naught else can be than Interlaken's queen,
A thousand jewels on her snowy breast!

Yon graceful form, thus flecked with pearly white,
Suggests the pride of Marathon's curved shore,
Whose pure Pentello wealth still greets the sight—
For sculptors' hands, alas! exhumed no more!

And this majestic, ever-darkening peak,
Which here in lines of deepest azure rears
Its clear-cut profile 'gainst eve's glowing cheek,
Like Egypt's grandest Pyramid appears!

Thus to my fancy in the waning light
My cherished mountains like loved friends re-
turn,
And greet me till they shroud themselves in night,
While from their depths the rolling planets burn.

The Bouquet Girl; OR, HALF A MILLION DOLLARS.

BY AGILE PENNE,
AUTHOR OF "ORPHAN NELL," "STRANGE
STORIES OF MANY LANDS," "THE DE-
TECTIVE'S WARD," "WOLF OF
ENHOVEN," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A FOUL OUTRAGE.

"NINE o'clock, diavolo!" cried the adven-
turer, angrily, as he listened to the sound of
the bells. "Is it so late, then?"

"Is it nine," the colonel assented, in his
stolid way.

"And ze young man—ze actor, Craige,
comes soon after nine; we have no time to
lose; we must be quick or else we shall have
our labor for our pains. I must insure our
bird, at once."

The carriage was drawn up to the curbstone
just below the old tenement house, the horses'
heads facing toward Hester street.

The colonel was on the box all muffled up
and striving to appear as much like a regular
driver as possible. The adventurer had de-
scended to the sidewalk.

"I will proceed at once," he said; "turn
ze horses around and drive right up in
front of ze door; then jump down and be
ready to assist me—ready to place yourself
between us and ze corner, so that no one can
see me place ze girl in ze coach. Be tranquil!
keep your head and we shall not fail."

Then the Italian marched into the old brick
barracks, while the colonel proceeded to carry
out his instructions.

Straight up the stairs walked the Italian un-
til he arrived at the door of the apartments oc-
cupied by the old Irishwoman with whom the
Bouquet-Girl had found refuge.

Upon his arm the adventurer carried a heavy
gray traveling shawl, and in his hand was a
small sponge.

The Italian seemed to possess the catlike
faculty of seeing in the dark, for the gloom
that reigned supreme within the entry did not
appear to disconcert him in the least. When
he arrived at the door, he paused, listened for
a moment, then took a small bottle from his
pocket and poured the contents upon the
sponge.

A strong, subtle odor filled the damp and
murky atmosphere, at which the Italian shook
his head.

"She will smell this—she cannot help it; ah!
but will she suspect? Oh, no! it is not prob-
able."

It was a bold game the adventurer was
playing, and now at the eleventh hour his
heart began to fail him; he felt a doubt of
success, so hesitated to knock.

"If I am caught it is ze State Prison," he
murmured; "but for what do I play? A half
million of dollars! Is it not worth ze risk?"

With a desperate effort he screwed his courage
to the sticking point and knocked at the
door.

His design was a simple one—to pretend to
the girl that he had some important infor-
mation to communicate regarding Mr. Craige;
swear that the young actor was in danger; per-
suade her out into the entry under the pretense
that his information was so important that it
must not be overheard by any one; and then,
when once the door was closed, the sponge
saturated with chloroform and the heavy shawl
must perform their offices.

He had little fear that the old Irishwoman
in person might interfere with his plan, but if
she took the alarm, her cries would arouse the
neighborhood, and then "good-by" to all hope
of success.

In obedience to his summons the door opened
and the Bouquet-Girl appeared in person.

"Hush, signora!" cried the Italian, mysteri-
ously; "betray you no sign of surprise! To
serve you I come. That noble young man, ze
Signor Craige, he is in great danger; you can
save him, but no one else in ze wide world
must know that in ze matter I have a hand, as
it may cost a me my life. Please step you out-
side and then to you I will explain; ze lady in-
side must not hear."

Frank dreamed of no danger—had no
thought of evil. "The lady is out at present,
so speak freely; no one can overhear you," she
said, at once. The name of Craige was the
open sesame to her confidence.

And then, in the heart of the scheming
Italian, came a great thrill of joy. Success
seemed certain.

"Ah, signora, if you will have ze kindness
to permit me to enter," he said, bowing
humbly.

"Certainly."

And as the Bouquet-Girl turned half-around,
came the villain's opportunity. He seized the
broad hand he placed upon her mouth, thus
stifling any attempt to alarm the house; with
the other hand he applied the sponge, satu-
rated with the potent drug, to her nostrils.

He held her against his breast, so that it was
almost impossible for her to move.

In vain she strove to resist the effects of the
powerful drug, for now, too late, she fully
realized that she was the victim of a terrible
outrage, but the firm hand pressed over her
mouth, and the sponge applied directly to her
nostrils cut off the supply of air, and resist
as she might, nature was yielding.

Her senses began to reel; her breath came
thick and heavy; all around her grew suddenly
dark, and then a great wheel, throwing a vast
shower of brilliant sparks, seemed to revolve
within her brain; the wheel burst and all was
darkness.

The drooping head, the light, helpless form,
only kept from sinking prone upon the floor
by the powerful arms of the adventurer, re-
vealed to him that the girl was wholly in his
power.

No time was to be lost, for the old Irish-
woman might return at any moment; then,
too, it was nearly time for Craige to make his
appearance.

Sustaining the unconscious form with one of
his strong arms, he folded the shawl carefully
around her, and then, raising the girl in his
arms, her identity almost completely concealed
by the heavy muffer, he prepared to descend.

First he carefully closed the door of the
apartment, so that the entry way was again
wrapped in utter darkness, and then rapidly
turned down the stairs.

"Diavolo!" he muttered; "it will not be
well for any one to attempt to stop me now, for
I am desperate! I play for a great stake, and
I mean to win at any cost!"

Fortune—fickle jade! favors the brave, they
say; and also the desperate, too, for in this
case the Italian succeeded admirably in his
risky attempt. He reached the street door
without encountering a soul.

In obedience to orders, the colonel had the
coach-door open, and stood ready to assist his
leader.

"Up to ze box and drive off," the leader
exclaimed, as he advanced with his burden.

Not a soul was within sight, excepting the
people passing by on Grand street, at the cor-
ner, and of course, at such a distance, in the
darkness, no danger was to be apprehended
from them.

The colonel climbed to the driver's seat as
fast as his clumsy limbs would permit, but, be-
fore he had got the reins fairly in hand, the
principal, with his helpless burden, was safely
ensconced within the coach with the door
snugly closed.

The colonel started the horses, and the
brutes, ugly, clumsy animals, struck into a
lumbering trot.

Down the street they went, and turned into
Grand, and as the coach rolled past Center
Market, the keen-eyed Italian, ever on the
watch, detected the tall, manly figure of the
young actor, Craige, evidently proceeding to
his home.

"By all the devils below!" cried the Italian,
drawing a long breath, "but this has been a
narrow shave. Five minutes more—three min-
utes even—and he would have caught me com-
ing out of ze house. And what then?" he
cried, sinking back upon the seat and clutching
at the air with his nervous fingers. "Would I
have a-let him rob me of ze prize? No, no,
no! not while this hand can wield a dagger!"

CHAPTER XXX.

THE HAUNTED CELLAR.

The carriage did not proceed directly to the
lair of the Italians, but took a roundabout
course. This was done in order to baffle pur-
suits if any prying eye had been attracted to
the coach.

Through Grand street to Broadway they
went, up Broadway to Spring street, through
Spring to Crosby, directly past the dingy, two-
story brick house where the abductor oc-
cupied apartments; but did not stop. The route
had been carefully arranged beforehand, and
the object of driving past the house was to see
if the coast was clear. The street was dark,
almost deserted; fortune indeed seemed to fa-
vor the vile.

Straight around the block they drove until
they came again in front of the house; then
the colonel halted the horses; the man within
descended from the coach with the insensible
girl in his arms and entered the house.

The two men occupied the basement floor,
entrance to which was gained by a passage
under the front stoop.

The moment the Italian and his precious
burden disappeared under the stoop, the colo-
nel drove off so as not to excite suspicion.

So far the plot had succeeded admirably;
the Bouquet-Girl was in their power, and the
abduction had excited no suspicion.

Everything had been carefully arranged, the
door to the basement was unlocked, also the
door leading from the entry to the front base-
ment. Within the room a coal-oil lamp, the
wick turned down, afforded a dim light.

The two rooms were scantily furnished; a
couple of chairs, an old table, two rude bunks
arranged upon the floor, some dilapidated
dishes, and that was all.

Rather an insecure prison-house for the cap-
tive girl, one would be tempted to exclaim,
considering that the two front windows, al-
though closely barred by heavy shutters, look-
ed right out upon the street, and that a single
cry of a woman's shrill scream—would be cer-
tain to alarm the neighborhood.

But the Italian had thought of all this; he
was playing for a heavy stake and had arranged
to win.

Below the basement was a cellar—a dark,
deep unwholesome pit, never used by the oc-
cupants of the house, for the landlord had not
only locked and nailed up the door which led
to it, but had absolutely taken the stairs away,
thus cutting off all access to the underground
region.

Good reason had the thrifty Italian who
owned the house for thus acting. Within the
narrow walls of the little house some ten
families were huddled, a family to every room,
all Italians, and the poorest of the poor, and
so it had been for the last few years—in fact,
ever since the Italian had bought the house;
and among these families had been many de-
spairing souls, and when the yoke of poverty
had pressed too hardly upon their necks, down
into the dark recesses of the cellar they had
gone and ended their wretched lives with their
own hands.

The house began to get an evil name; the
superstitious foreigners declared that the un-
quiet spirits of the men who had so wantonly
rushed into the presence of their Maker, haun-
ted the cellar; tenants began to move out and
seek other quarters.

In fact, so widely had the evil reputation of
the cellar extended that total strangers to the
house, but all Italians though, weary of life,
stole into the fatal vault, and there, with
their despairing hands, solved the problem of
existence by ending it.

No use to lock the door; these weary, reck-
less souls forced the portal open, and so, in a
rage, at last the landlord not only nailed the
door up, as firmly as wood and metal would
permit, but took away the stairs bodily.

These stringent measures had the desired
effect, and the wretched men who were weary
of life, sought elsewhere for suitable places to
shuffle off the mortal coil.

Acquainted with all the particulars regard-
ing the vaults below, all access to which had
been so carefully cut off, the busy mind of the

Italian at once perceived how suitable a place
it would be to keep the girl securely. Once
she was safe in the cellar, little danger that
she could either escape or succeed in giving an
alarm.

The first thing was to gain access to the cel-
lar. The two men had formerly occupied a
room in the garret, but when the adventurer
formed the plan to abduct the girl, he thought
of the haunted excavation, so securely closed
to all the world; no better place to hide the
girl away could possibly be found.

And, as luck would have it, the two base-
ments over the cellar were unoccupied.

He at once set to work promptly; he hired
the front basement and the colonel the back
one; this was done so as not to excite suspi-
cion, which might have been raised if one man
had taken both rooms.

The basements secured, the next thing was
to cut a trap door in the floor and construct a
rude ladder, so as to get into the vault. This
was not a hard task, and was soon accom-
plished.

The cellar was damp and unwholesome, and
as dark as Egypt, but all this was so much the
better for the Italian's purpose. He had an
idea in his head which, developed into action,
he fondly fancied would prevent the girl from
attempting to alarm the neighborhood.

At the back of the subterranean apartment
a partition had been run across, and inside of
that, at right angles, another partition, thus
forming two small rooms, formerly devoted to
coal and wood.

High up in the wall in each of these apart-
ments there had been a small window. These
apertures for air and light the landlord had
boarded up when he had resolved to isolate the
vault from all the world, but, as the poor ten-
ants in the house were continually wrenching
off the boards for firewood, he had finally
bricked up the window-spaces solidly.

One of the little rooms had a good strong
door to it, and the wily Italian at once pitched
upon this apartment as the prison-pen for the
girl.

Removed as it was from the noise of the
street, and with only about six inches of the
top of the back wall abutting on the yard, and
that wall a good solid one, it would be almost
impossible for the girl to guess that she was
still in the midst of busy, bustling New York.

Upon the floor of the wood-room a rude bed
had been spread. A chair and a table com-
prised the rest of the furniture.

To render the door secure, the Italian had
affixed two stout bolts to the outside, one at
the top, the other at the bottom. A lantern,
too, he had provided, and a hook, attached to
a beam in about the center of the cellar,
whereon to swing it.

The door which led from the entry-way into
the basement had been provided with strong
locks and stout bolts; in fine, no measure of
precaution had been neglected.

Straight into the front basement the adven-
turer bore the girl, locked the door securely
behind him, placed her upon one of the rude
pallets spread upon the floor, and then turned
up the other, revealing the line of the trap-
door beneath. Thus he had concealed the trap
from any prying eyes.

The trap open, the gloomy vault below, il-
luminated only by the single light of the lantern,
was revealed.

Raising the light figure of the girl carefully
in his strong arms, the Italian descended the
ladder, and then, when he had gained the floor
below, he proceeded to deposit his precious
burden in the narrow room which his craft
had provided for her.

He placed her upon the rude couch, removed
the shawl which had been carefully wrapped
around her head, and then, fetching the lan-
tern, which he stood upon the table, he pro-
ceeded to carefully examine the condition of
the unconscious prisoner.

Quiet as the inmate of a tomb, the Bouquet-
Girl lay. At the first glance the Italian be-
lieved that she was dead.

"Diavolo!" he cried, in consternation; "if I
have killed her all ze fat is in ze fire! Was ze
drug too strong? Oh, no! I have used
more than that before; but perhaps she is
afflicted with heart-disease; if so, ze drug
might produce a fatal effect. If she is dead,
then am I a cheated man."

No word of pity for the girl—no regret for
the perpetration of the foul outrage; only an
oath and a bitter thought that the half a mil-
lion of "dollars" would escape him, after all
his trouble.

But his apprehension was unfounded; the
girl was not dead, and slowly, little by little,
the color came back to her face.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ITALIAN'S SCHEMES.

THE potent effects of the powerful drug
were gradually passing away, and the Italian
gloating over the prostrate form of his victim
—as the malignant-eyed Faust might have
gloated over a helpless soul, lost to virtue and
destined for fires eternal—saw that she would
soon wake to consciousness.

"It is good!" he murmured. "I was a-sure
that I had not made ze dose too strong. To
kill her now—to see her die at ze very moment
of victory—oh, no! that would be too terrible
a blow! She must live—live to give me my
share of that half a million of dollars."

The pale lips of the girl moved convulsively,
and a low sigh escaped from between the pearly
teeth.

"She will soon open her eyes, and then—
what then, ha?" mused the Italian. "Will she
cry out? Will she scream, or will she accept her
fate and rest tranquil?"

These questions would be answered in a few
minutes, for already the victim was beginning
to recover her senses.

Slowly the dark eyes opened and stared in
astonishment about. The effect of the subtle
drug still lingered, and for a few moments the
girl's mind refused to work with its usual
clearness; but, little by little, the truth flashed
upon her; back to her mind came the memory
of what had transpired in the old tenement-
house. She remembered the message of the
Italian, the violent assault, and the application
of the potent drug to her nostrils.

The Bouquet-Girl was quick-witted, and now
that her mind had regained its customary
clearness she fully comprehended all that had
happened.

She glanced around her; the dim light cast
by the lantern fully revealed the narrow com-
pass of her prison-house; and the lank figure of
the Italian, gazing down upon her with the
hollow, insincere smile so natural to his face,
betrayed the pitiless jailer.

"You have recovered from your illness—
ah! my dear child! in my heart I cry aloud
with gladness!" exclaimed the abductor, per-
ceiving that the girl was in full possession of
her senses. "Permit me to assist you to a-
rise!"

He advanced to her side; the girl accepted
the proffered arm, although she shuddered at
the contact.

The Italian noticed the convulsive move-
ment.

"You are a-cold!" he cried. "A hundred
thousand pardons that I have no better place
to offer you, but I am a-poor; what can I do?
We cannot conquer fortune, therefore we must
be content."

He assisted the girl to the chair placed by
the table upon which the canteen stood.

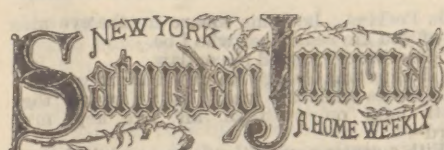
"Rest you there, my own stricken deer;
rest tranquil; do not fear; your father will
protect you against all ze world."

"Why have you brought me here, and
where am I?" Frank asked, gazing fearfully at
the dark, damp walls that surrounded her.

"If you remember, my child, I came to tell
you of Mister Craige; no sooner did his name
my lips escape than it seemed like one great
cannon-ball to strike you to ze heart; you
turned pale—you tottered—you cried in ac-
cents wild, 'I die, I die!' and upon your gentle
frame delirium did seize. What was I to do?

You was my child! Was I to stand there like
a man of marble and see you a-suffer and die,
no! the feelings of a father that throb here in my
heart forbid it! I determined to bear you
away; I had this shelter to offer you, miles
away from ze great city where you were in
danger. Ah, my child—my dear child, there
is one grand plot against you."

"Against me?" The sentence came me-
chanically from the lips of the girl, for she did
not believe a single word that came from the
lips of the adventurer, one statement alone ex-
cepted. He might speak truth when he said
that she was many miles away from the city,
for since the interview in the tenement-house
hours seemed to have passed. The girl little
dreamed that thirty minutes would have elap-
sed the entire time.



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OR,

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the wiles and arts of

A Beautiful Adventuress—

the strength and weakness of

A Deluded Old Man—

the antagonists of beauty,

The Blonde and Brunette—

the man of noble soul,

The Master of the Lodge—

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a Hindoo Prince in disguise, all are unusually strong and effective *dramatis personae*, whom the author, in his usual intense narrative style, leads through the mazes of a singularly exciting and powerful life drama. It will be given a hearty welcome.

Sunshine Papers.

Of Something To Do.

"Of something to do?" Yes, of something to do that will make your own room bright and beautiful, and the whole house bright and beautiful, if you are persevering and kind-hearted. Why, the dining-room, and the sitting-room, and the parlor, and the kitchen—if you have a home containing all these rooms, if not the one room that you have—may be made so like fairy-land, by your kind fingers and a little daily care on your part, that father will grow young again; and mother's sad face will brighten into constant joyousness; and Biddy will be cross less often when the stove doesn't draw well and the ironing hangs about several days over its wonted time; and the boys will ask their friends to "drop in and spend the evening" instead of always taking up their hats to "go see a fellow" as soon as supper is ended. And this "something," if done with a kindly desire to make home more beautiful, to foil temptation by purifying influences, to give pleasure to the brothers and the sisters, the gentle mother and the careworn father, the invalid friend and the faithful servant, will count for as much, ay, more! before the Eternal Justice, as many a rich man's alms.

"Of something to do." And how shall you commence? Well, first the woodland, and the rocky, shady bits of roadside, shall help you. Bring home a basket full of roots of ferns and vines, and all the plants that are small and pretty and grow in wild shady places; and another basket full of the rich black mold that you can dig up in the woods; and another basket full of green mosses. Now go in the garret, and hunt among the rubbish, and see what treasures you can find there. Bring down all the old baskets, and small shallow wooden boxes; and, if you cannot find those, get a wire ox-muzzle, or a deep earthen dish. Baskets and wire receptacles must be completely and compactly lined with moss, the green side showing through the wicker work. Next fill with mold, and your wild ferns, and plants and vines, and grasses, and finish the top with a layer of moss. Your boxes and earthen dishes need only moss at the top. The boxes may be papered, or painted, or covered with bits of gay cloth. In deep window-seats, where there is not too much sun, or on little old tables (their shabbiness hidden by a cover), or in out-of-the-way corners of the room—upon a bit of board or oilcloth—distribute your fern boxes and dishes; they will not need sunshine, only a daily sprinkling, to make them flourish nicely. Baskets may be stood upon an old plate; or baskets and muzzles may be suspended from door or window-frames, in corners, or under arches. Hold a basket under and give them a daily sprinkling. The iron brackets used for bird-cages will hold them nicely.

Having put graceful bits of woodland all about the house, you can fill other boxes for the window-sills, with such bright flowers as geraniums, fuchsias, pansies, verbenas, coleus, pinks, bouvardias, heliotropes, lantanas, all of which will grow from slips. Petunias, German ivy, sedums, lobelia, yellow myrtle, Kenilworth ivy, money-wort, oxalis, and the plant

known as the Wandering Jew, introduced about the edges, will grow in a luxuriant, graceful, downward mass, hiding the sides of your window-boxes. A few seeds of alyssum, mignonette, nasturtiums and gypsophila, scattered about the edges, will also add to the beauty of your window gardens. If you cannot afford to buy your roots, any friend who has a few flowers will break you off some slips, which will soon furnish you all the plants you desire.

Next you must ornament the centers and the ends of the mantles, the bare spaces on bureaus and buffet, the unoccupied corners of tables, the deserted corners in rooms, and the wall brackets. Common flower-pots, tin cans that have been emptied of corn or tomatoes (covered around with flannel), odd pieces of glass or china, or old-fashioned jars, will answer your purpose, now. Fill them with rich earth and a plant in each. Begonias (there are many varieties, and all are lovely, and grow easily) and fuchsias make charming ornaments for the center of mantles, or to stand on tables, bureaus, etc., as they need no sun—only considerable water. A petunia on one end of the mantle will drop gracefully downward, while a jar containing German-ivy upon the opposite end will afford an opportunity for training the ivy quite around any picture that hangs near. A pot of lobelia with its pretty vine and azure flowers will ornament a corner of a parlor table; jars of Wandering Jew or Kenilworth ivy will grow profusely in any lone corner, and a plant of yellow myrtle set on a bracket will soon drop to the floor.

The little wooden wall-pockets that come for holding combs and brushes, sponges, letters, etc., may be lined with bright paper, then insert a tiny tin box, or wooden box, and hung under pictures and planted with vines. The effect, against light or white walls, is delightful. A single root of fern, planted in a jar, is extremely pretty on a shelf or bracket. Broken goblets and cups should have a covering crocheted for them, of gay wool, and be suspended from racks, windows, etc., and filled with earth, and ivy, sedum, lobelia, or some such graceful plant. Shells may be suspended in like manner; or shallow ones be planted and used to ornament brackets.

With a few seeds, a few slips of flowers, a few ferns and wild vines and plants, some old boxes, baskets, odds and ends of crockery and glass, and discarded tin cans, a little ingenuity expended in hiding defects with paint or flannel covers, plenty of rich mold and water, and a little daily patience and care to cut off faded blooms and dead leaves, and administer water, any home may be made most charming. Who will undertake to do something in the way of winter-gardening? Knowing that it will prove a fountain of perpetual pleasure, and a panacea against many a mental and physical ail, that many a reader may act upon this "something to do," and with glorious results, is one of the best wishes for her friends that can be breathed by

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

SHOW AND SENSE.

"THIRTY-FIVE or forty yards of silk are required by a first-class dressmaker for a short street costume." And when the bill is presented to papa won't he be somewhat short in his remarks! Won't it cause him to become short of funds just then and there! I'll wager my week's salary that he'll inwardly wish all "first-class dressmakers" in the Dead Sea. Surely, if a piece of silk will constitute the happiness of womankind she should be thankful when she has forty yards in one dress, but I don't believe she's one whit happier, one bit more contented than a rosy-cheeked lass that lives in the country and whose dress of calico—cost but ten cents a yard and twelve yards was considered entirely sufficient.

To be sure, she isn't what you'd call "stylish," she has the singularity to be contented with her lot; she's just old enough to be willing to help her mother, and she is so "strange" that you cannot get her mind to run on fripperies and fashions. Of course, you who wear those forty yards of silk wouldn't like her, and if you were to come to see her she'd not envy you one bit. She'd tell you that she had seen more beautiful sights than your fine dresses. She wouldn't miss seeing the sun rise of a summer morning for all the good clothes in the world. Her life is one exemplification of happiness, and it is so full of the good and useful that she cannot think of being as happy. While others are at their late balls and their dances, she is asleep to refresh her for her morning duties. "It is not fashionable to arise early," may you exclaim. Then why, when there are so many new fashions springing up, cannot some one set the "fashion" of early rising, and see that all who can follow it will do so. We might think more of the glories of nature and less of the amount of goods fashion dictates that we shall carry about us.

But, this amount of cloth requires many hands in the making of it up, and gives work to those in need of it! Yes, truly so; but at what ruinous pay—scarcely enough to keep soul and body together. Many tears have been shed over those very stitches. If these dresses could but speak, how many tales of suffering could they not tell! When the amount of cloth required for our dresses is enlarged, enlarge the amount to pay for the making up of the same. Does the fashionable dressmaker pay her workmen in proportion to the amount she receives herself?

Now let me comment on another. Why do we think every new fashion "charming"? If the Dame says we must be cramped into a dress so tight that we can scarcely move, don't we say, and think, "the fashion is splendid and the style most becoming"? And if Dame Fashion puts her veto on tight skirts, and tells us we must be arrayed in flowing, balloon-like garments, don't we turn up our noses at tight clothes and pronounce the opposite style "almost too sweet for anything"? This Dame Fashion is exacting, arbitrary and oftentimes bold in her demands, and we weak—sometimes silly—creatures appear to be afraid of her, and yield to her sway without a murmur. If a woman sets her mind entirely on fashion, and lives for show, certainly she must have enough to do to occupy her attention, but she must have a long purse as well.

Nowadays, one must have a special dress for every day and every season, and there are many persons who wear a party dress but once. I was remarking to a lady friend of mine the other day, that the women of the Revolution were no doubt happier with their two or three garments than we are with our forty-yard silk dresses. She laughed at the idea, called those good women "old-fashioned," and stated that they could not be mentioned with us of our day. Perhaps not; for I'll be bound they were far better and more contented than we. And did not they make noble wives and mothers? Did they run hither and you after the fashions, while their husbands and sons were fighting for their homes? What true, noble and patriotic women they were, and if we had but some of their spirit—some of their sense we might be a little better for being

somewhat old-fashioned. They deserve to be honored and revered by us. Love of country and not fashion was their maxim. They lived to work and not for show. EYE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

Artemus Ward on the Train.

I WAS on the cars once. It was a good many years ago, though. I was going up to Podunk to collect sixteen dollars which a man owed me there, the expenses of the trip would be fifteen dollars, but I needed the other dollar. In the seat behind me sat the venerable Artemus Ward, quietly looking out of the window in hopes of seeing a funeral procession along somewhere that he might try to make himself feel solemn. His wax-figures were in the baggage car. By-and-by, a sanctimonious-haired colporteur came in, took a seat by him, and presented him with a tract. Not to be outdone in politeness Ward presented him with his card.

The tract peddler said he had heard of the name somewhere. Wasn't he the man who traveled with a circus or a show or something worldly? The same. He shook hands with him, and asked him how he was getting along. Artemus smiled and said:

"At the rate of forty miles an hour."

After this the sedate colporteur was confiding and conversational, and from time to time I caught the following:

ARTEMUS. "This is the place where John Nixon resides."

COLPORTEUR. "John Nixon? I think I never heard of the name. Who is he?"

WARD. "The gentleman I refer to is a shoemaker. You see his sign over on that shanty!"

COL. "Oh, yes."

COL. "This is pretty fast riding."

WARD. Yes, but on a road in Indiana I once rode so fast that you could not see the farms along the road. The train cast the shadow because the sun couldn't get a chance to fall on it. I put my hand out of the window and the wind took my finger rings off. We were going west from Baldwinville to Briggs Station, forty miles distant, and I tell you what's a fact, we got there two minutes before we started by the clock there. Ran over a man on the track, but he never recollected the circumstance, it was so sudden. The towns along the line looked like one city straight along. We went so fast, sir, that the present moment seemed to be a week back. The whole train was off the rails more than half the time. Boy fell off hind car, but the section behind prevented him from falling to the ground until some one reached out and grabbed him. Oh, it was a big ride."

COL. "It was indeed, sir."

COL. "Do you use tobacco?"

WARD. "Oh, yes. Do you wish a chew?" (handing him a plug twist).

COL. "No, no, I thank you. I never touch it."

COL. "Do you ever read instructive tracts?"

WARD. "Oh, no. But I have an excellent friend who does."

COL. "This is a nice-looking town."

WARD. "It is indeed. I lectured here last winter. Audience couldn't have been bigger if it had been doubled. Everybody was there, and those who couldn't come stayed away. Even the landlord was there and was seen to laugh. Everything was thrown upon the stage. Ladies who had nothing to throw threw kisses. Only one thing occurred to mar the occasion; a deacon attempted to swallow everything I said and was choked. They tried him out on a settee. When I got through they had me deliver the lecture over again, and every one said they got more time for the money than they ever had got in their lives."

COL. "Indeed?"

COL. "What makes them stop here so long?"

WARD. "You see, this is the accommodation train, and we had a temperance lecturer aboard, and the train will stop here to allow him to fulfill an engagement here, and passengers can save a good deal of time by walking ahead if they are in a hurry. I once rode in a train in Illinois that went so slow they had to make a chalk-mark on the track to tell which way it was going. It is a fact, sir. And as it was dark a man coming up on the track ran against the rear car and nearly killed himself. Why, they had to hire passengers to ride on it."

COL. "That corn looks bad there."

WARD. "It certainly does. The cobs in the first place were planted too far apart. You see you have got to have your corn-stalks close enough together that they can whisper in each other's ears and chin each other up. That's the way we do in Indiana. When we go to harvest our corn we bump the corn trees and catch the grain as it falls to the ground in large canvas spreads. A very little of our corn will make a bushel. They have manufacturing factories there to make the silk up into dress goods, and a fine article it makes. It is bound to supersede silk-worms."

COL. "Well, well. It must be a good country."

WARD. "Yes, it is very large."

COL. "Are you fond of music, Mr. Ward?"

WARD. "I could live on it—with a few variations. Everything turns to music on my ear, and I can bring music out of any thing I touch. I used to play very sweetly on that intricate instrument they call a hotel gong. It was music that had the very best accompaniments. The boards listened for it with the most intense interest, and often encored it with the clapping of hands. I know of no more stirring musical instrument to put a crowd into ecstasies than the morning gong. Of course time is the main thing in that kind of music. You want no false time. A little too soon is as bad as a little too late. I know of no musical instrument in all my travels that could move a whole house so completely as a gong. It has a wide range—principally from the collar to the garret of a six-story house, and its tones never grow old, and it is always in order. I would give money to hear the melodious notes of one at the present time. It would be music most acceptable. God bless the man who first invented it, and the man who first rings it to-day."

COL. "Your show is principally wax-figures?"

WARD. "Yes, they are portraits of people who figure the best in the present age; Judas Iscariot, Shylock, Benedict Arnold, Nero, John A. Murrill, Pontius Pilate, Herod, and other celebrities. I was showing in Hardscrabble last month and discovered a deacon hammering

away most industriously at the head of Judas Iscariot, and his wife and family egging him on. I was disposed to venture near and inquire the cause of all that popular tumult, when I was informed in short order that the deacon was irritated at having his statue set up for Judas, and I saw that there was quite a family resemblance between them, or at least there had been. I gently admonished him to cease, though the admonishment floored him, and he got up looking like the likeness of Iscariot more than ever. He needed a new nose of the most improved pattern, and a new eye would not have hurt his appearance very much. He was tenderly led away. The show business was extremely lively for awhile, and I did not charge them anything to get out, not a cent. During the row somebody hit Julius Caesar in the stomach and doubled him up, but we warmed him over and laid him out on a board and straightened him out again until he felt as well as ever. Any one who insults one of my wax-figures to its face insults me, and all international negotiations between us cease on the spot. For Napoleon's sake I have fought more battles than he ever did himself. If they are wax they are not made to be chewed up, in the least. I'm naturally as peaceable as a mother-in-law, but I don't want anybody to sit down on me without due notice according to law."

COL. "Before I get off here will you not take a few tracts, Mr. Ward?"

WARD. "I will. Thank you. Though when I find that I am in need of any thing of that kind I sit down and write my own. I'll do most anything to oblige you. Good-day."

Here the colporteur left the train, and Artemus went to fishing for a cinder in his eye.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Topics of the Time.

—There are in Texas 96,000,000 acres of cotton territory; that is some 15,000 square miles; and the whole were judiciously cultivated, the yield ought to be at least 50,000,000 bales per annum.

—High ritual is on the increase in London. Thirty-nine churches now celebrate daily communion, against 11 last year; 340 have eucharistic vestments, against 114; 83 display candles on the altar, and since 1867 the use of incense has been extended from three churches to sixteen.

—"The Bashi Bazouks are wild beasts!" exclaimed the Grand Duke Nicholas, when an envoy from Mehemet Ali's camp opened negotiations with him concerning the treatment of the Bulgarian population. "Oh!" was the response, "I am not expected to defend them. I always take an escort myself when I must pass through their camp."

—It is stated in the *New Northwest* that at the battle of Big Hole, Sergeant Wilson, who appears to have been the conspicuous hero among the enlisted men, was shot at by one young buck whom he had passed, laid down his gun, picked up the young red-skin by the ankles, wound him around on a sapling at one swing, and again passed on.

—"Fourteen years ago," says the *Vennago Spectator*, "when the oil fever was at its height, Pithole was the largest and thirteenth of the oil towns. Its post-office delivery was enormous, ranking the third in the State. Last November the borough of Pithole polled only six votes, equally divided between the two parties, and last Monday the survivors of the great oil metropolis of other days petitioned the court for a dissolution of its charter. Such is life."

—His Majesty King George, the King of Dahomey, is said to have jumped for joy when he heard of the loss of the oil he had been induced to pay for. He had treatment of British subjects, and when he heard that the Sirrus had broken down and was compelled to return to England, his delight was unbounded. He attributed both these events to "fetish," and believes his powers of working evil upon his enemies are great indeed.

—A mineral has been found in Kern county, Cal., which is puzzling the geologists, no one knowing what to call it. It is opaque; in color it is black, lustrous, metallic, laminated; soft; yields to the finger nail; leaves a streak the color of amalgam on the back of looking glasses; it is unchanged by a heat which reduces a Hungarian crucible; is perfectly insoluble in nitric or muriatic acids or any of their combinations, and has a specific gravity about equal to that of mispickel.

—The Moffett registering machines have been introduced into nearly all the bar-rooms in Richmond. The price of alcoholic liquors has been advanced five cents and new glasses holding ten per cent. less beer are used. The liquor dealers have abolished the credit system and now do business only on a cash basis. A State official who is known throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, went into a saloon last Monday and called for a glass of lager. It was delightfully cool and he was about three minutes in swallowing it, after which he wiped his lips with his handkerchief and eyed the bartender suspiciously. "You forgot to turn the crank," said he, quite sternly. "Yes, but you have forgotten to pay me," was the response. A five-cent piece rang on the counter, the bell sounded, the dial moved and the bartender announced that the public debt of Virginia had been reduced half a cent.

—A thousand feet above Lake Tahoe lies Shakespear Peak, a precipice with a ragged descent by a narrow and very precipitous path. Being a girl of high courage, she made an excursion to the crest of the rocky ledge. They reached the summit in safety, and had a merry time, laughing, singing, flirting. One of the young men challenged Carrie Rice to descend by a narrow and very precipitous path. Being a girl of high courage, she made an excursion to the crest of the rocky ledge. They reached the summit in safety, and had a merry time, laughing, singing, flirting. One of the young men challenged Carrie Rice to descend by a narrow and very precipitous path. Being a girl of high courage, she made an excursion to the crest of the rocky ledge. They reached the summit in safety, and had a merry time, laughing, singing, flirting. One of the young men challenged Carrie Rice to descend by a narrow and very precipitous path. 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"GOOD-BY."

BY MRS. ADDIE D. ROLLSTON.

I spoke it low, with trembling lips
And heart that pulsed with bitter pain,
For well I knew the rosy past
Would never live for me again;
For with that little word, "good-by,"
Died every golden, sunny dream
That hitherto had made my life
A radiant path of blossoms seem.

I could not chide thee for neglect,
Nor deem thee false, when well I knew
No warmer feeling stirred thy heart
Than friendship's passion, calm and true;
And yet a nameless, bitter pain—
A longing, vague for something more
Than friendly vows and pledges sweet
When all my skies a shadow were—

Came to me then, and so I spoke,
With bitterness and dreary pain
Remembering that hope's sweet flower
Would never bloom for me again.
"Good-by! good-by!" I said it o'er
And kissed again the smiling face
Upon whose dimpled softness grief
As yet had left no blighting trace.

The dreary days but mock me now;
No bright hopes come with budding spring;
No rosy flowers of summer bloom,
And to my life their fragrance bring.
For over olden joys and dreams
Dark shadows of remembrance lie,
Slue with the bitterness of death.
I spoke the sad word, "good-by."

The Guard Over the Wedding-Ring.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

A DELICIOUS August day was throbbing to its close—a day that had been royal in its exquisite beauty of golden sunshine and fresh western winds, its tropical voluptuousness of warmth that was so perfectly enjoyable.

It had been just such a day as suited the passionate, eager soul of Meta Blanchard, fair, beautiful Meta Blanchard, with her dreamy dark eyes that, lately had reflected no dreams that were blessed or hopeful or happy, for the time had come and gone, when for her, content should crown her as it had crowned her in those by and gone days when Ernest Warwick had been her lord and master. They had been right royal lovers. They suited each other to the finest fibers of their impetuous, passionate, capable natures; they had loved and trusted and looked eagerly forward to a life together which no foreboding of clouds or even the shadows of clouds darkened. Meta had worn the ring he had given her as the seal of their betrothal, placed on her dainty finger between warm, eager kisses—as proudly as a queen wears her coronet—everything had pointed to such perfection of happiness, spiritual, physical, temporal, that even before there came the blackness of darkness between them, Meta often used to wonder, tremblingly, if mortals could endure such sweet joy as was hers, past, present, and future.

But, the blackness of darkness came. Some unlucky business complications plunged Meta's father into irredeemable poverty, and some equally unfortunate freaks of fate disclosed the fact to an inside few that he had been deliberately living a life of cheating and trickery and fraud which, if made widely public, would not only bring him and his family into horrible disgrace and contempt, but consign him to the cell of a prison for perhaps the rest of his natural life.

Then followed dreadful days for the Blanchard family—days when there seemed no choice for him who had worked such desolation but to blow his brains out, and leave his wife and daughter to shift as they could. Days when every conceivable horror stared them in the face; days when the most desperate efforts were being frantically made by Mr. Blanchard's colleagues in rogues' to escape from the consequences of their evil-doing.

And then, Mark Penwyn came frankly, boldly, courteously to Meta, and told her what he had to say.

"I am rich, Miss Blanchard—it will not even embarrass me to set your father straight with the bank. I am sufficiently influential to keep the unfortunate matter quiet—I will do both, and your family can go on again in your accustomed luxury of living, provided you will marry me. I admire you more than any woman I ever saw or knew. My name and position and family are irreproachable. Will you trust yourself to me?"

And, although the awful suddenness of it fairly took the girl's breath, the equally sudden way of escape he offered, could not possibly have failed to strongly impress her.

Then came such urgings, such wild, beseeching importunities from her father and mother, and desperate conflicts with her absorbing passion for Ernest Warwick—oh, such terrible days that followed, when, one time she would declare that no combination of circumstances was capable of wrenching her soul from the man she loved; times when she would cry and moan and stumble in the darkness of spiritual danger that engulfed her.

Then, worn out mentally, exhausted physically, until even the power to suffer and resist was gone utterly from her, Meta consented to wreck her own bright young life, sacrifice her own bright young self.

And she wrote to her lover a weary, hopeless note, only telling him it must all be over between them—rather telling him it was already ended between them, because she had promised to be Mark Penwyn's wife, and his diamond slave-ringlet was scintillating on her finger as she wrote her death-warrant.

After that, she never heard a syllable from Mr. Warwick. He did not as much as protest against her letter. He did not as much as give way to anger, or passion, or regret—to her, but she heard afterward—when she had been Mark Penwyn's wife nearly three months, and the wheels of her life outwardly ran in velvet-lined grooves, and her parents were again in the full flush and swing of the prosperity and luxury they loved better than truth or honor—prosperity and luxury for which they had not hesitated to sacrifice their child—it was at this time, a year previous to the time which we choose out of Meta's history to open our recital of her romance, that some one told her that Ernest Warwick had gone abroad with a look in his blue eyes, and an expression on his fair blonde face, and a tenseness about his handsome, haughty mouth, that was not good to see; a look that betokened the havoc, the recklessness, the mad desperation of the soul from whom the cup had been so cruelly, sharply snatched at almost the lifting of its overflowing brim to his eager, waiting, smiling lips.

That had been long ago; Meta Penwyn had graced the magnificent home her husband had brought her to right royally. Her beauty, her hauteur, her cold graciousness, her unfailing courtesy of high breeding, her accomplishments, were enough separately or combined to make her husband proud of her; and he never tired of heaping upon her all the costly elegances and extravagances that he knew she became so well.

He was a model of gentlemanly considera-

tion and patient, forbearing kindness, and unobtrusive, delicate devotion. He never forgot how he had won her, and in her heart Meta blessed him for his conduct to her, while she never failed an iota in her duty to him, or reminded him by word or look or act that she only endured her life.

I say she reminded him by no word or look or act. I say she was always prompt in her duties, always the courteous lady, the hospitable hostess; but Mark Penwyn read aright the sickening weariness that underlaid it all; he perfectly appreciated the fact that he had married a woman of marble, a woman whose heart was seared and withered, a woman whose inner life was a pitiful hopelessness.

So many women could have loved him. He was not much older than Meta—he was yet among the thirties. He was a gentleman of fine culture, and sweet disposition, except for a certain pride that sometimes made him seem a little hard. He never had been a demonstrative man, but he had a great, loving soul, and, above all, a tender, unobtrusive, delicate devotion that sometimes, despite herself, touched Meta.

And he loved her. That comprised it all. That tells the whole story. While she—sitting out under the wide-spreading shade of a huge linden tree, that stood on the very brow of a hill that delicious August evening, was wondering how much longer the heart-sick yearning for what she had deliberately put away from her would consume her.

It might have been because of the appealing beauty of the day, with its gorgeous sunset, and the soft murmuring of the wind as it freshened with foretaste of slumberous autumn days coming; it might have been the unconscious influence upon her of that which was to follow so shortly; but, whatever the cause, Meta was experiencing a heart-sick, unendurable yearning for a sight of Ernest Warwick's face, a sound of his voice, a touch of his hand.

"My love! My lost love! My murdered love!"

Her fair white hands went up to her face to cover its pale pain, to hide the passionate eagerness in her eyes that were starving for the sight of a face that was not her husband's. Then, with great dumb cries in her heart that corresponded with the mute anguish on her lovely mouth, she slowly took up her book she had brought to read, "Mildred" it was, poor, suffering Mildred, whom Meta thought was so like herself in her capacity for loving and agonizing—and returned to the house to meet Mr. Penwyn on the lawn, calm, courteous, unobtrusive as ever, but with a fire of idolatrous admiration and love glowing under that quiet exterior.

"I should have walked down to your favorite haunt for you, Meta, if you had not come as you did. Is it not a perfect summer-day? And how charmingly cool it will be for your guests to-night."

Her guests! She had positively forgotten there was to be company, and gayety, and music, and dancing that night, and she would have to dress, and move among them, and smile, and speak pleasant words as usual.

The prospect almost appalled her for a moment. Then, the same customary apathy came to her aid.

"I had quite forgotten it was Thursday. Yes, it promises a pleasant evening."

She made a move to enter the house; Mr. Penwyn did not offer to detain her, but there came that hurt, pained look in his kindly eyes that was often there nowadays.

"You will find a letter awaiting you in your room. Edson said there was one in the mail, and he sent it up. You look tired, dear."

She smiled faintly.

"I think I am. I believe I will rest the half-hour before dinner if you will excuse me."

Of course he excused her, and she went upstairs to her room, slowly, wearily, to suddenly galvanize into wild-eyed excitement and almost uncontrollable eagerness when she caught sight of a letter lying on her toilet-table, addressed to her in Ernest Warwick's handwriting—a letter her trembling hands could scarcely open, so did it shake her to her very soul's center.

It was brief, terse, but Ernest Warwick all over. It was dated from the hotel a half-mile from Penwyn Place, and the date was four hours' old, and the contents were, word for word:

"Somebody says you receive your friends to-night. I am coming. For God's sake, don't refuse to see me."

That was all. No address, no superscription. What it all meant, passionate, masterful, yet pleading.

It ought to have warned this wife of Mark Penwyn, from its very passionate masterfulness, that the throbbing thrills of mad ecstasy that made the blood surge in her veins through her veins, she should have been warned that a chasm was yawning at her very feet, that there was imminent danger ahead.

But the past months had been too terribly desolate—the future was too utterly hopeless—the present afforded too rapturous ecstasy for this woman to resist the temptation to see him once more, to touch the only hands that ever thrilled her; and, besides, how could she prevent his coming?

Already there sprang up specious reasoning and ready argument. How, she asked herself, was she to prevent his coming, unless she sent a servant, armed with authority, forbidding him the house?

Of course he must come—as any other guest, but by the shining light in her eyes, by the pink flushes on her face, by the look that quivered on her sweet mouth, you would have known Ernest Warwick would not come as any other guest.

She dressed herself exquisitely that night, and marveled herself at the glorious creation she was, with her dark eyes shining, her splendid face all irradiated with an excitement of hope and joy that had been so long, so pitifully a stranger; with her lustrous hair arranged in a graceful coiffure that suited so well her classic head; with her white lace dress, where pearls gleamed more whitely still and whose purity was not marred by a hint of faintest color or glow of gold. In her shiny dark hair was a delicate white drooping flower, with no leaf to break its waxen fairness, and at her belt a similar spray.

Her husband had looked at her in silent, worshipping wonderment. He had never seen her so wondrously fair, so enchantingly radiant; but he did not know the wherefore and the why.

Early in the evening there was quiet entertainment. Later, the music flashed out in inspiring dance-music, and everything was in the full swing of enjoyment and perfect success when Mr. Warwick came and found her where, of all places, it were best he had not found her—alone in the dusk and fragrance of the immense conservatory, where fountains played and flashed, and flowers bloomed in sweet, sensual fragrance.

Meta had not arranged it so. She had gone thither for a moment's rest, and the first she

knew that he had come was his voice in her ears, his arms around her.

"Meta! Meta! Meta!" It was so exultant, so jubilant, it was so sudden, his caress, that she had hardly time to turn and free herself—instinct with woman's impulse of sacredness.

"Mr. Warwick! You—"

She could not say another word. The sight of him so filled her with mad ecstasy, with sudden strange realization of the fact as she never had realized it before—that she, the wife of one man, had left all her heart in the keeping of another, with almost fear at the power she felt at his presence, his influence—all these thoughts and sensations thronged over her, depriving her of speech, almost of action, as he stood there, smiling in her face—smiling, yet desperately, almost hopelessly.

"Oh, Meta! My darling! Yes, you are my very own, as much as ever you was—I don't care for whose name you bear, for who pretends to own you! My Meta—you are not going to send me away empty, hungry! For all these months I have only endured life without you—despair has made me what you may call reckless, what I call determinate, resolved—for I am come, my love, my love, to plead my cause with you, and pray you to go with me, to happiness and forgetfulness of the past dark days—to happiness with me, dear, happiness with you and I together."

They were the same caressing, masterful tones that in other days had made her thrill with delight and pride and worshipping love. The same beloved voice, tempting her, and she in all the panoply of weakness, she, shorn of her strength by all those days of longing and weariness unutterable.

The fountain plashed softly. The crystal drops played high in the fragrant, dusky air, and rippled, a trickling cascade, over shining shells, and trailing vines, and laughing-eyed star-flowers, into the still, dark basin below, where water-lilies with folded waxen petals slumbered on broad green leaves like a baby on its mother's breast.

Lights mellowly burned in their globes. Faint, mellow music came from the dancing saloon, a ravishing, sensuous waltz that swayed her soul as it inspired twinkling feet. Every accessory appealed to this woman's lover's nature; and beside her, looking down on her bowed head, eagerly reading every expression of her mobile countenance, Ernest Warwick stood, his eyes burning, his handsome mouth smiling, his heart thrilling for love of her.

And Meta? Mark Penwyn's wife? The beautiful woman her husband loved to idolize, whom he trusted and honored to the utmost?

She stood still, leaning her cold trembling hands against the bronze rim of the fountain, listening to the sweet, sweet tones; thinking, in a mad, wild joy, what bliss he offered her, wondering, in a vague way, if it was she, she, who heard such words, who had such speech spoken to her—asking herself if this was the end of it all, that she should be called upon to choose between dreary, honorable enduring; or—

A little indignant cry, the outburst of womanly purity and principle, came passionately from her lips.

"You must not speak so to me! It is terrible—terrible! It is—"

He grasped her hands forcibly in his, and compelled her glance by the power of his own.

"Terrible—that I love you, when once you swore that all of heaven was centered in my love for you, yours for me! Terrible, my darling, that I want you for my own, that I come to release you from a bondage cruel as death in life! Terrible, Meta!"

He was so quietly exultant in, and so gracefully confident of, himself—and her!

It frightened her.

"I must go—I must! I am afraid some one may come—"

He would have put his arms around her—only, she suddenly shrank away, this woman who, an hour ago, had been in a fever of excitement and wild exuberance of passion at the prospect ahead of seeing him. He would have snatched her in his eager arms, and kissed her in rapturous imploration, only that, seeing what he felt, what he meant, Mark Penwyn's name came almost involuntarily to her lips—Mark Penwyn, who, after all, was her friend and protector, and—husband; who, after all, was greater, grander, nobler than this handsome, pleading lover at her side.

And as Meta called his name—her husband's name—alarmedly, helplessly, Ernest Warwick knew, as by a revealing light from heaven, what it all meant. How, stronger, better, braver than he, although woman, Meta had stood true to herself and had saved him from that which in cooler moments he would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.

He was not a thoroughly bad man. There was nobility and conscience in him, and it uprose at the piteous, startling cry in Meta's voice.

"Hush," he said, hoarsely, "don't call upon him to protect you from me! My God—what must you think of me!"

"I can forgive it all—only go—go—go! Go right away—"

And Ernest Warwick instantly obeyed her—who, in her strength born of weakness, had been victor over two human souls!

A year later, when life was flowing on very peacefully in Meta Penwyn's home, and her first babe lay on her breast, her husband came to her, one sweet, peaceful autumn afternoon, with a tiny casket in his hand that he opened as he sat down beside her couch.

"Meta, my wife, one evening last summer when you and Mr. Warwick were together in the conservatory, I overheard the entire conversation, and was a witness to your fidelity and womanliness. My darling—you did not know then I knew it all; you never knew I dated the commencement of our content from that hour—that from then, out of the solemn knowledge of that time, out of the peril of that time, out of its grand triumph, there grew God's blessing in turning your heart more and more to me. And, Meta, to-day this has come to me, for you—this exquisite pearl ring, with a long letter from Ernest Warwick, written on his dying bed, asking me if you may wear it as a guard over your wedding-ring, as a gift from him in commemoration of the time when you saved him from such terrible temptation. Meta, with the letter is the announcement of his death. Dear, will you wear it, as a gift from the grave, and yet a symbol of your happiness and mine?"

And reverently enough Mark Penwyn placed the delicate gem on the fair finger; and while Meta's sweet eyes filled with tears, her lips smiled as she lifted them toward her husband's to kiss.

"God has been so good to me—so much better than I deserve! And, Mark, I am not worthy of you!"

He kissed her, and laid the pearl-guarded wedding-ring finger on their baby's soft white cheek.

"My wife!" he said.

PRESENTIMENT.

BY HENRI MONTCAIM.

Ah! my weary day
My love was far away;
And always, when night came,
I could not speak his name;
I used to breathe his name,
And whisper soft, "Good-night."

Yet once—I know not why—
There came a night when I—
I could not speak his name;
But only wept instead:
And when the morning came,
I heard that he was dead.

The Bitter Secret;

OR,

THE HEART OF GOLD.

BY GRACE MORTIMER.

CHAPTER XVII.

A FIEND AT THE COUCH.

THE twenty-four hours which we have described indicate the history of forty-eight months; during which the hapless Monica was abandoned in the unknown wilderness.

Her sufferings, mental and physical, are beyond narration; they would only harrow the reader's heart for naught; suffice it to say that three days after her recovery from unconsciousness, she lay at dusk on the bare floor in that corner of the room which was furthest from the bed. She had never laid upon it since that night she had discovered the diabolical mystery connected with it. She had passed through all the various stages of slow starvation, the giddiness, the raving hunger, the sick torment, the unendurable gnawings of her vitals, the gradual consuming of all strength, and one by one of all her faculties; and now she lay in a stupor, her sharpened face turned up and her blackened, parched, and excoriated lips open, and gasping for breath, while her hollow eyes glared through the glazing of coming dissolution, sightless and senseless.

The watch-dog had been visited twice in that time, and fed, and Monica had called and entreated the Italian, receiving no reply, not even the turning of his eyes in her direction. She had long known that it was intended that she should never emerge alive from her lonely prison, and argued from this, (as long as she had sense to reason, poor soul, or to think of anything outside of her own cruel pangs,) that her father's life was by this time taken, and that his murderers dared not now set her free, since she suspected their guilt.

Be sure she had not tamely succumbed to her premature fate; rich in personal courage, as well as possessing great natural ingenuity and resource, with boundless patience and industry, she had tried every device which the cleverest captive could imagine to escape from her captivity, but her enemies had foreseen everything, and had prepared for everything that was in her power to do, so that in whichever direction she bent her efforts, she found them frustrated. The framework of the windows being slight, and worn, she had been able to drive out one of the sashes, and she could have easily lowered herself to the grass beneath by the aid of the bedclothes, had not the horrible apparition of the blood-hound, crouching beneath, been ever before her, its blood-shot eyes watching her, its red jaws dripping in expectation, and its continual hoarse baying chilling her blood; in vain had she endeavored to propitiate the brute by kind words and coaxing gestures; famine had made him savage, and some diabolical art of the Italian had imprinted on his canine brain the indelible conviction that the captive was his worst enemy.

Then she had tried to stave him with the only heavy articles in the room, namely the great rusty and androus that stood in the empty fireplace; these the animal had dodged one after the other, successfully, in spite of the unhappy girl's hours of anxious watching for an opportunity, and breathless dexterity in seizing it when it came; and, seemingly quite aware of what she had tried to do, a spirit of vengeance tenfold more malignant than the first had taken possession of the dog, and he was content to crouch by the hour motionless under the shelter of the wall, his red orbs, which glittered with a metallic glare, fastened in horrible fixity upon her.

Rotten as the door was, the lock was new and sound, and no force that she could use, minus iron tools, availed to break it open; the chimney was too narrow to permit of her exit through it, even could she have climbed it as a man would have done; and lastly, the walls defied her soft hands to beat them down, and the floor resisted her every effort to tear up a plank or loosen a nail. Had she had any means of lighting a fire, she would have burned her way out, but her jailers had been far too cunning to leave her so much as one match, knife, spoon, or article possible to be converted into a tool which would serve her purpose.

And now all was over; her life was ebbing fast away, the chill of death was on her; she suffered no more pain or fear, for she was mercifully wrapped in the stupor that comes before death from inanition. But on this, the evening of the third day came an event.

She never heard the stealthy fall of horse's hoofs approaching over the heath, nor the savage yell of delight uttered by the famished hound as he heard and recognized the coming of his feeder; not a thrill of joy or fear passed through her death-struck frame, though the dog having been thrown his meal of raw flesh, as his howl of rapture and then wild-beast growlings and snarlings attested, the cottage door was unlocked at last, and stealthy feet mounted the creaking narrow stairs, stopping often for a minute at a time; came nearer—nearer—paused outside her door, and in the dim little passage an ear was placed to the keyhole; but still poor Monica took no heed, for she was dying.

It was Vulpino, who, having satisfied himself that his victim either could not or would not give any sign, boldly unlocked and entered her prison. He saw her at once, and glanced from the still figure on the floor to the unoccupied bed in surprise, asking himself why she had chosen between them thus; then perceiving that she had brushed away the sand from the slightly raised edges of the square upon which the bedstead stood, he shrugged his shoulders in grim comprehension, smiling darkly, and his wicked eyes twinkling, as if in anticipation of some interesting episode; and then he stalked over to her, knelt, and saw that she breathed yet.

At first he merely made a goblin-like grimace of disapprobation, muttering in his own language:

"Bah! you might have spared me this disagreeable duty, Piccolina. My word! but you must have as many lives as a cat, not to have succumbed yet. Ebbene! to work, Giacomo Vulpino; and now for a pretty bit of surgery."

The low muttering tone in which he spoke

seemed scarcely enough to rouse the lightest slumberer; but perhaps it sounded in the long silent room with unnatural loudness, or perhaps her ebbing life made one more desperate effort to save itself, inspired by the human voice; at all events, Monica's dim eyes opened suddenly, and she lifted them slowly and painfully up to his, and gazed.

The Italian had taken from his pocket a case of medical instruments, and was in the act of selecting a tiny crystal tube, fine as a drawing-needle, but seeing her eyes he stayed his hands and returned her look, an expression of intense wonder gradually overspreading his harsh and sinister features.

Monica had one incomparable beauty, her eyes.

Lit by health, happiness and love, they had haunted the dreams of many a beauty-lover; and even now, though they were sunken, dimmed, and encircled with inky circles, they shot their spell straight to the heart of the Italian, who was like all his nation a born devotee at Beauty's shrine, so that for the moment he forgot everything else in the rare pleasure of drinking in the loveliness thus unexpectedly revealed.

This retarded Monica's fate for full five minutes.

The paid assassin did not say a word or attempt to make her speak, he simply looked his fill, narrowly, critically, and with a series of strange smirks of perfect approval, as if he was gazing at a notable picture in a gallery; but at last he drew a long breath and muttered in his own tongue, which Monica had studied enough to gather the meaning of:

"By Santa Maria, 'tis a pity to extinguish such fires, and carry their charming memory forever, associated only with ugly death. But I see—I see! I get a peep of your game, Fratelli Marshall! the signorina is a Derwent, whether she knows it or not! By the exquisite eyes here reproduced to perfection of Dame Ethelgiva Derwent, whose venerable portrait hangs in the picture-gallery of the Weald, this unknown Monica Rivers from across the Atlantic is a true Derwent, whose life stands between these hungry money-hunters and their prize, and therefore it is that she must die. Ah well! 'tis no concern of mine; they pay me well, and I love to be paid well; so you must go, pretty lady, and lie till the day of doom in the mysterious vault to which yonder couch will softly bear you."

Once more turning to his instruments he lifted her arm delicately, between one bony finger and thumb, and traced upon its cold and shrunken surface one big blue vein, with the blunt end of the minute glass syringe, and when he had selected the spot he was looking for, he took from the case a little vial containing a white fluid, and unscrewing the top of the syringe, adroitly charged it with a drop or two and screwed it on again.

But Monica had been gradually regaining her consciousness as he knelt there, and not only had heard and translated all he said, but was now slowly and feebly fitting meaning to his words; slowly comprehending the accompanying actions.

As he lifted her arm once more, having previously mounted on his high sharp nose a pair of heavy gold-rimmed spectacles, she made a supreme effort to move her blue lips to speak.

He perceived the attempt, and, curiosity overcoming the professional unconcern with which he had been about to win his money, he relinquished her arm, laid down the deadly little weapon carefully, on the bare floor at his side, and deliberately producing a flask of spirits, wet her mouth with a few drops, and chafed her temples with his great clammy palms, until she felt a thrill of life pass through her veins.

Again she moved her poor pale lips, which had almost forgotten how to do anything but gasp and quiver in pain, but she was far too weak to utter a sound as yet, and could only look up piteously at the man whom she fully recognized as her appointed murderer.

With what unnatural apathy she told herself this! But she had already suffered pangs worse than any death—nothing could affright one so miserable.

The Italian patiently went on restoring her; he had long been so inured to the extremity of crime, and with impunity—that his conscience was stone dead—he never had had much—his heart—(always a small one)—obtruded—more on his chosen course; it was not remorse, and it was not pity which now stayed his hand from taking away this sweet young life for a paltry thousand pounds; it was simply that he would like to hear her version of the Derwent-Marshall affair, which, for all he knew, held far richer awards in its secrets than he had been promised.

At last she could speak, though she was so sadly reduced that the effort to articulate a few syllables seemed like the squeezing out of the last drops of her heart's blood, and sent the last arid tear of exhaustion rolling scantily down her skeleton cheek.

"I—know—you—" she panted, so faintly and huskily that Vulpino had to bend his disgusting great ear close to her mouth before he could distinguish the words; "I—heard—that—Vulpino—Mr. Derwent—poison—oh! Tell—is he dead?" The last three words she cried out together in a sudden throes of agonized suspense, while her shaking hands strove to clasp themselves and rise toward him in supplication; but the Italian never heeded the appeal, he was too intent on his own plans.

"Ma pretta mees," said he, in his broken English, calling up a would-be benevolent smile to his hideous visage, "wat you want of the reesh man Derwent-a?"

"Is—he—dead?" reiterated Monica, piteously.

"Dat I tell ven you tell me de oden-a, pretty mees!" said he, nodding his head grotesquely, and picking up the tiny tube for a playing, to twist in his long, dirty-nailed claws. "Wat you—oh! queek, tell-a me."

Monica saw that it was only wicked curiosity that had restored her, and turned her poor face away in bitter disappointment.

"Know you dat I hold de leetle life in my hands?" grined he, lightly tracing the selected vein on her bare arm with the sharp point of the syringe. "Now you answer-a me, pronto—or I—ah! and de leetle Riviera lie dead, essa stessa; o—hel an' den I weep-a!" and he made a playful little prod at her arm with the point of the syringe, and pretended to wipe his eyes.

Monica had resigned herself to die some twelve hours since, and had not hoped for deliverance since, but she now felt a sudden enraged reluctance to meet death at these vile hands.

She found strength enough yet to drag herself to her knees, and to plead for her young life in a burst of agonizing prayer.

"Oh, save me!" she moaned. "What have I done to you—to any one, that I should be murdered?"

"You see these delicate leetle machina?" he retorted, putting it close to her eyes and sinking his voice to hoarse menace, while his fiendish glare rested upon her derisively; "see these

nice-a-sing, veech is full-a of a virus deadly as the poison of de serpent vat you call-a 'Dane Blanche,' small-deadly beyond all odds! These sharp end, look—copetta—I pierce de nice-a pretty flesh of young mees veech it, in de vein, here, guardare! Just a preck—no more! Bote ven I press on dees-a extremity—aha! I shoot into de vein dat weesh lays Piccolina Riviera at my feet una corpa morta—a corpse—in one—three minute; chi!

Monica perfectly followed this horrid explanation, and sunk down again with a low shuddering moan, her hands still pitifully supplicating for mercy, and the great tears, which she had supposed all shed long ago, coursing once more down her convulsed face. He wanted her to gratify his wicked curiosity regarding her connection with her father, and she knew there was no use in her complying, even had she possessed the strength to utter the explanations, for she knew that she must die, and that he had been appointed to assassinate her.

"Only say that my—that Mr. Derwent still lives," she implored, with a last expiring effort, crawling to him and clasping his knees; "and then dispatch me quickly," she cried out, in thrilling tones.

"Ha! misera! scelerata! little scamp-a!" he hissed, angrily, raising her determination not to betray anything she knew, and then he stood silent, glooming darkly down at her, as he cast about in his crafty mind whether he could possibly wring the withheld information out of her, or whether he had after all missed anything of importance; but presently he made up his mind that she was too far gone now for him to maneuver, and that he might as well proceed with the business in hand while he felt angry with her, as he could then shift the blame of the deed upon her own head.

"Verra vell, foolish scioeca—idiot! I vood-a spared-a you, per il Grand Idiot; bote—mind-a—you vood not spik, so—" He suddenly bent down and snatched her arm, she uttering an involuntary cry of despair, a cry that was little more than a whisper, so faint and feeble was it, yet it was heard by one who long had overlooked the interview.

Just as the Italian poisoner brought the sharp point of the death-charged tute to the artery in the satin inside of Monica's arm, she faintly struggling, and averting her poor blinded eyes that she might not see her murderer, a stalwart form darted through the open doorway, a hand of iron seized Vulpino's collar, and while he was sent reeling in one direction, Monica found herself caught up to a broad breast, and a voice which she had dreamed she heard many times speaking most sweetly through her delirium, said now in the same full-hearted tones:

"Dear little girl! Poor little girl! Have I found you at last!"

And she, raising her half-senseless eyes, with a smile of ineffable joy and peace, beheld the pale tender face of Geoffrey Kilmyre close to hers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FOLDED IN TENDER ARMS.

He seemed to be almost beside himself as he held the terribly altered girl in his arms; he forgot everything but her, and the sufferings she had gone through, and the anxiety he had endured in his long, feverish search for her, and the thoughts he had had about her; and she was not so far gone as to be unconscious that he was straining her against his loudly-beating heart, and showering kisses upon her poor, sharpened face, and whispering sweetest, warmest words of pity and love to her; and, somehow, she did not think of shrinking from him, nor of feeling astonishment, or embarrassment, or anything but rest and safety—oh, such dear, delicious rest, and such peaceful, satisfied safety.

For indeed they had thought so much about each other, these two impulsive, generous, honest hearts, that it was the most natural thing in the world that they should meet just so, without one shadow between.

But, presently, things faded from poor Monica's eyes, and she felt her dear hands and kisses no longer; she sunk into the stupor from which the assassin had waked her.

Geoffrey stood with the limp and lifeless body in his arms, gazing at it wildly.

He thought Monica was dead.

He could not breathe, he grew blind, he reeled giddily.

He believed that he had come too late, after all, and that this, the sweetest woman in the whole world, would never lift her brave, proud eyes in gentle kindness to his again.

How long did he stand there holding her thus? He took no note of time; he was in a trance.

But Vulpino, the wretch who had done this foul deed, moved in his corner where he lay in a distorted heap, just as he had fallen. He was recovering his senses.

Geoffrey started, and looked round at him with bloodshot eyes.

A fearful smile crossed his bitten and bleeding lips. He carried his burden to the bed, and softly laid it down; he kissed each sweet eyelid down over the dark, dim eyes; he straightened the beautiful limbs with reverent hand, and placed the two little hands upon the still bosom; then he bent to lay his death-pale cheek against hers, his caressing hand stroking (oh, so tenderly—so tenderly!) her long, unbound black hair; and a groan tore its way from his very soul.

"Oh, my poor darling!" he muttered, chokingly—"my little, brave, good darling, I came too late to save you, but, dear, not too late to avenge you—not too late for that! And Heaven, I know, will not hold me guilty, though you, sweet, if you were alive, would plead for your murderer, so gentle and so kind you were!"

He heard another movement in the corner, and he strode across the room in time to seize the throat of the Italian, who was in the act of stealthily gliding toward the door.

"Would you like to hear the programme of the next few minutes, murderer?" said he, through his gritting teeth, while he forced the trembling wretch to meet his flaming eyes.

Vulpino burst into a torrent of Italian, as well as he could articulate it with those iron fingers gripping his gullet; but Geoffrey was too excited to comprehend him, although, in his calmer moments, he was not a bad speaker of the language; and he put a summary stop to the tide of protestations and explanations by giving him a shake that almost dislocated his neck.

"Come down-stairs out of the sacred presence of your victim," he ground out, suiting his actions to his words, and forcing the Italian before him. "Come outside and bear your punishment, and after it your execution—which two duties I take upon myself with joy—with Joy, bound, do you hear?" giving him another fierce shake that turned the strangling wretch black in the face, "and I

only wish we were back in the middle ages, when you would have been thrown into a caldron of boiling oil, or strung up by the hair for the rooks to peck at. Oh, my God! to think that all your miserable carcass could suffer if all the tortures of the Inquisition were at my command, could not bring to life again that lovely, sweet girl! How could you—how could you do it, man!"

And for a moment his anguish of grief overtopped the vengeful fury that was lashing him on to ruin by taking upon himself the miserable Vulpino's punishment; and Vulpino took advantage of the momentary loosening of his hold to wrench himself free with one sudden jerk and dart; but ere he had reached the door, deeply socketed in the wall which surrounded the cottage, Geoffrey's pistol covered him, and he stopped, perforce, his teeth chattering and his knees doubling up under him.

Since he could not stand, he made the best of necessity; he knelt, clasped his great bony hands, and gathered enough English to make his defense.

"It ees a mistake-a, Grand Idiot! Vood you keel-a me, veehtout to hear von explain! Ze donna, see oes note yet dead, no, not at all—see leevs! Come back-a, oond see, Corpo di Dio! I nothing do to bare, No, I deed note ze injection of ze poison; no, I not begun, vee-a you come; see leevs, I tell-a you; vee-a, oond you keel-a me, destroy you self, all for noiseing, niente! bah!"

Geoffrey had only let him run on so long because he was striving—still keeping his pistol leveled at the wretch's heart—to pick up his riding-whip, which lay on the ground beside the horse he had ridden. Having now secured it, he strode quickly back to the culprit, and without another word brought down the good new thong across his parchment face with an accuracy of aim and a nervous vigor that left a mark like a narrow red ribbon straight from the right bony temple down to the left side of the long poking chin, and wrung a yell of pain and rage from the astonished sufferer.

Before he could jump to his feet, nimble as his motions now were, another cut had crossed his predecessor, slanting exactly the opposite way, so that the hideous visage was now marked with a blood-red X, from the clean lines of which little round drops of the same color were starting, to trickle in tiny rivulets down among the wrinkles; and then Vulpino was down among the writhing, and he would not have a bullet through his brain without further parley, and reminded that he had better occupy his mind in saying his prayers while his penance was progressing, as its duration was all the time he would have on this earth, which henceforth would furnish nothing but a grave for a wretch such as he.

And then the blows rained down on his quivering body, each lash stinging like a flame, and the doomed man dared scarcely writhe in his tortures, but glared at the death-dealing weapon which glittered in his executioner's left hand, while the right was employed with his flagellation. However, desperation soon came to Vulpino's aid, and in spite of his physical sufferings, he contrived at last to make a coherent appeal, with such an air of sincerity that Geoffrey deigned to listen, although he did not pause in his labor a moment for that.

"Eef you vee-a let me to explain," whined the Italian as well as he could with his agonies making his teeth jar, into his tongue, "I vee-a say moche dat you vee best-a to know about ze Fratelli Marshall; I vee-a show you how to save ze old signor; as for ze mees, see is only faint wis ze famins, I no toche her as yet. See, here ees ze siringa, vis ze veleno, vat ees poison, tutta in it—vedere, behold!" And he held up the tiny tube, through the crystal of which Geoffrey could see the fluid glittering, quite full. "Oond eef you take away ze life-a, vee show vee to save ze signore? None can do dat bote ze avvelatore—ze professed poisoner, guardate!"

When Geoffrey was out of breath, he snapped his whip in two, and pressed it at his well-flogged enemy; and he did not at once blow his brains out as he had promised to do; perhaps he had worked off some of his fury, and his better nature was coming to the surface again—perhaps the villain's remonstrances had reminded him of the possibility of ameliorating the case, and of the fatal indiscretion of gratifying his vengeance without due investigation of facts; at all events he folded his arms, and stood looking contemplatively down at the writhing form and craven face of the Italian, listening to the torrent of entreaties, confessions, promises and bewailings which he poured out so volubly, until a faint sound from above sent his startled eyes up to the window overhead, and he saw the blessed vision of Monica's white face and large, dark eyes, and her little weak hand tapping at the pane.

So then he uttered a shout and was running like the wind for the house, but stopped at the door with a grunt of grim resolution; wheeled and went back to his trembling victim, whose swarthy face had lit up with a relief and joy almost equal to his own.

"Get up," said Geoffrey.

Vulpino obeyed with abject docility.

"March!" said Geoffrey, waving his hand toward the other side of the cottage.

And Vulpino strode with alacrity round the corner, and came in sight of the dog's kennel, and of the dog's carcass lying across its threshold with its throat cut.

"Take the chain off your sleuth-hound, demon," Geoffrey commanded; "it is for you that your villainous scrag neck has not made the like acquaintance with my hunting-knife as your dog's. A fine sentinel to set over a tender helpless woman, isn't it? Oh, you scoundrel! if you don't smart for this yet!"

To the tune of these remarks Vulpino unlocked the massive chain with which he had secured his bloodhound while he went up-stairs.

In his absence he always had left him loose, to scour round the house, so that his prisoner should not issue from any window, even had she succeeded in escaping from the room in which she was locked.

Geoffrey took the end of the chain from him, and ordered him to hold up his hands; which, when he obeyed, were securely bound together, after which Geoffrey proceeded to bind his ankles after the same pattern; disposing of the balance of the chain by passing it several times round his waist; so that, the job finished, Vulpino found himself trussed up firmly as a hare, and weighted to boot with no less than a hundred pounds of rusty iron.

This garbished he was fain to sink upon the grass beside the carcass of his slaughtered accomplice, the hound; while Geoffrey walked off cheerfully and bounded up-stairs to feed his glad eyes and exulting heart on the dear and despairful sight of Monica alive and conscious, and even able to give him a pale, tremulous little smile as he came toward her, and to pierce his soul with the solemn fervor of her grateful eyes.

Joy at the prospect of deliverance, more especially at his hands, added to the few drops of brandy which the poisoner had poured down her throat in the hope of hearing from her some important secret before she died, had

given her a fleeting strength so that, recovering consciousness, and finding herself once more alone, she feared that all she had lately seen had been only one of her delicious visions, and had dragged herself painfully inch by inch to the window, to see whether any one was below.

But now she had an attendant ready to do anything or everything for her; oh, such a tender, patient, loving, beaming nurse! How carefully he fed the famished creature, a crumb at a time, with tiniest sips of sparkling water just flavored with wine, between, so wise and prudent that although it cut him to the heart to refuse her anything, he would not let her have a crumb too many a moment too soon, lest she might die yet, poor suffering darling, for even the bulk of an egg of the delicate wine-biscuits, which he had providentially chanced to have in his pocket, would have been a surfeit for her shrunken and debilitated stomach, which had eaten on itself only for three excruciating days.

And when she drooped against him, her grateful eyes closing in spite of her, with the weakness of one out of a long fever, how gently he laid her on the bed—how patiently he sat by her; then when she awoke anon, hungrier than ever, how joyously he went through the whole critical process again!

So that, in about four hours, she was strong enough to let him carry her down-stairs in his arms, and to lie on his bosom, tied to him by his own soft, docile, muffled, on his gallant horse's broad back; and so, walking as gently as possible, they made the journey from that border county into the next back to Dornoch Weald; arriving there at eight o'clock of the evening, after dark.

"And now—Mr. Derwent!" muttered Monica, feverishly, when her speech had come back to her.

"Dear, two days ago he was yet alive," said Geoffrey, turning pale; "but I was got out of the Weald by a despicable stratagem and have ever since been searching for you. Their chance whippers warned me of your danger."

"Oh, not me—tell about him!" moaned the girl. Geoffrey could not but gaze perplexedly at her, for how was he to account for her devotion toward one who had treated her so cruelly.

"I have every hope of his safety, yet," said he, stoutly; "the eyes of the country are upon the Weald; and even hydrophobia must run its course. Cheer up, sweet Monica; I think we shall be able to save him yet, you and I."

Then he told her where she was.

The conspirators had recognized in the stranger American at first only an accidental meddler in their affairs; but since then their eyes had been opened to the electrifying truth that she was Mr. Derwent's lawful and only child; a mere whisper in Mr. Derwent's ear was the only thing wanted to set him promptly revoking that untoward will, the unjust terms of which the two brothers, knew too well; and naming the interloper as his heir, to the exclusion of every other candidate. Her doom, up to that revelation, having hung in the balance, for circumstantial evidence had eventually pointed her out as the owner of the scrap of lace found by Godiva in the forest, that day of the double conferences, it needed but this culminating stroke of fate, revealing her relationship to Derwent, to seal it. That was why they had at first given her food and kept her in blessed unconsciousness of her sufferings, afterward abandoning her to starvation.

The delicate young creature whom Geoffrey had been wont to call his "lily-maid"—Godiva Montacute, had been the most inexorable of the trio, in passing the death-sentence upon Monica. The innocent prattle of good Mrs. Aberfeld revealing Master Geoffrey's kindness to the "bonny stranger lassie," added to the long, fierce scrutiny the yellow-haired adventress gave her dark-haired, spirituelle rival, that first day of Vulpino's custody of her in one of the uninhabited rooms in the Weald, had hardened Godiva's heart against her, until it seemed as if she could not rest quietly until Vulpino could say, "The heiress is dead." Geoffrey, who had presumed to overlook her almost proffered love, had been enthusiastic in his praises of her; the cruelly cold Derwent, whom she had one day wooed with half-mad candor, would hold this stranger in his arms, thanking God she was pure and better than she!

"Take her to Feltrie," spoke the cold, lowering beauty; "it is sufficiently removed from us here to render it impossible for her to escape; and hither and thither our schemes. She has only to pour her fatal revelations into her father's ear, and we are ruined. Feltrie is even more secluded than Dornoch, as there is no hamlet there, nor a railway within thirty miles; it stands in the very fastnesses of Scottish mountains; and the dialect of the people will be a foreign language to an American. Also, there chances to stand on the estate, three or four miles distant from the castle, a curious little hunting-lodge, built a hundred years ago by one of our ancestors to accommodate his sporting friends, and afterward diverted to the grim duty of imprisoning a certain suspected Lady Derwent, said to be selling the honor of her house to foreign invaders, and too popular among the common people to be openly punished. Once, as a child, Mr. Derwent took me through the old shooting-box; it was a prosaic enough looking cottage, until I saw the high stone wall that surrounded it; there were bars across the miserable little windows; and in one up-stairs room an infernal machine for secret murder, and the very trap, arranged under the great ghostly bed to slide away in the dead of night and drop the sleeper into a well forty feet deep."

And that was where Vulpino had spirited his drugged and unconscious captive the night after that fatal hunt, and where Geoffrey had at last traced him as he went to feed his grim canine sentinel, which, like himself, was more a beast of prey than a domesticated animal.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 389.)

Adventures in the North-west.

BY MAJOR MAX MARTINE.

Formerly of the Hudson Bay Company's Service.

III. THE FROZEN INDIAN.

It was my fortune, for many years, to be a factor in the service of that wealthy monopoly known as the Hudson Bay Fur Company. But my restless Yankee nature was not satisfied with such a monotonous, humdrum life, and I left that service, and entered upon the life of a free trapper.

I took my departure from Fort Ray, at the confluence of the Yellow Knife river with Great Slave Lake, intending to strike Milk river near the boundary line of the Dominion.

Winter had already set in, and the weather was uncommonly cold, even for that latitude, and I was getting in somewhat of a hurry to

reach the trapping-grounds; though not without many misgivings as to the result; for I had but that experience in woodcraft, for that knowledge of Indian character, that came to me in a few years.

Late one afternoon, as I was looking about for a good spot in which to build my campfire, I came across an Indian, sitting bolt upright against a tree, and nearly frozen to death. His eyes already had assumed that wild, stony look peculiar to starving persons, and I saw that whatever was done must be done quickly. I found a secluded place at the side of one of those enormous bowlders so plentiful in that section of the country, and gathering some birch bark and dry brush, I soon had a rousing fire.

The Indian was as stiff as a poker, so I took him on my shoulder, and carrying him to the fire, I laid him down upon my own blankets, and commenced the task of rubbing him back to life.

As soon as the blood began to circulate the pain commenced, and the Indian, though half stupefied, began to get angry at me; imagining me to be the cause of his present suffering. He drew his hunting knife and commenced stabbing at me, until, finally, I began to get a little vexed myself. I went and cut a good tough birch sprout which I seasoned well in the fire, then taking Mr. Indian by the scalp lock, I stood him on his feet, and commenced one of the liveliest whippings he ever had.

At first he danced about in wonder and amazement, and as he began to warm up he seemed to feel that he had received a good dose. But I did not let up until satisfied that the frost was all out of him, when I made him wrap up in my blanket and sit by the fire.

All this time he had not spoken a word, but I did not care for that; I knew he would find his tongue some time, and I was in no hurry. Leaving him a good fire, I shouldered my rifle and went to look for my supper. I had not long to hunt, for in half an hour I was back to my camp with a saddle of venison large enough to supply myself and my new boarder.

Cutting a half dozen slices, I threw them on the coals, and when they were warmed through I tossed him a slice, and without a word he devoured it as ravenously as a starved wolf would have done, and looked wishfully for more. Not wishing to kill him by a surfeit of food, especially as I had been to so much trouble to bring him to life, I gave him what I thought a man in his condition could stand.

I filled my pipe, and after smoking awhile passed it to him, and as long as the tobacco lasted he continued smoking. During this time he had not spoken a word, but the fumes of the narcotic opened the floodgates, and he found his tongue. He told me that he was an Assiniboine; that he had been on a long hunt alone, and that in an encounter with a party of Blackfeet he had been overpowered and robbed of everything he possessed.

I did not believe this, for I thought the Blackfeet would have taken his scalp, too; but he had lost all means of making a fire, or of procuring anything to eat, and if I had not found him just as I did, he would have been a dead Indian before another night. He succeeded in getting it through his thick skull that I had, somehow or other, been the means of saving his life, and begged to be permitted to accompany me.

I had not much faith in the abilities of an Indian who could not take care of himself, and did not consider him a very valuable acquisition; but I was agreeably disappointed. That Indian was my constant companion for fifteen months, and to him am I indebted for very much of my success as a scout and trapper. We became very much attached to each other, and I believe that either would have given his life at any time to have saved that of the other.

Little Beaver, as I called him, and myself, trapped together the remainder of the season, and then visited a trading-post a few miles above what is now Fort Buford, where we disposed of our furs. I bought him a good gun, ammunition and blankets, and after procuring my own outfit, we started on a regular tour of observation, and in search of adventure.

My own life had been so saddened that I no longer cared to return to the States, and at this time my only object in life was to get away from myself, so I became the reckless, roving hunter that I was, with not a thing in the wide, wide world worth living for.

My thoughts would often wander back to the dear old mountains of Maine, to the friends I had once known, and to the happy days of my youth—days that I knew were gone forever.

Fifteen months had passed away since I first made the acquaintance of Little Beaver, when there occurred that incident which deprived me of my Indian friend. We had made our hunt camp on Po-po-on-che (Long Grass) creek, between the Wind River Mountains and the Yellowstone river. We had seen no sign of hostile Indians, and were losing our usual caution in our fancied security.

One night we sat up until a late hour, telling stories and laying plans for the future, and both had done a hard day's work and were tired and sleepy, so that it was not long after we had rolled ourselves in our blankets before we were sound asleep.

We were both awakened at the same moment to find ourselves prisoners to a party of Teton. After binding us, they built a rousing fire, and sat down to enjoy themselves at our expense until morning. With the morning came preparations for a march to the village of their chief, Sitting Bull, where we arrived in two or three days, and were confined in separate tepees.

Next day the council-fire was lit, and we were taken, bound, before the old judges who were to decide our fate.

The old chief addressed a few words to me in the Indian dialect. But a disposition to be contrary had taken possession of me, and I made him think I could not understand him. He asked me who I was, where I came from, and where I was going; but I only shook my head, and they commenced the farce of an Indian trial.

They first decided the fate of Little Beaver. As they say in the police courts, "he was an old offender." He had been their mortal enemy for years, and had killed many of their tribes; so it was decided that Beaver should die at the stake. My turn came next, and I listened to their talk with as much indifference as though I had not understood every word they were saying. Some of them were clamorous for giving me the same fate as Beaver, while others wanted to see me run the gantlet.

At length the old chief arose and said that he had lost a son, and wanted me to fill his place. He explained to his tribe the advantages of having a young white brave among them, and ended by cutting the thongs which bound my feet and leading me into the circle.

I was young, tall, straight and tough; a good specimen of a Maine Yankee, and able to "get away" with most any of them in a fair fight. So they decided that Little Beaver

should die by fire, and that I should become an Indian.

The ridiculousness of the idea struck me immediately; and when I thought what some of my aristocratic friends would say, if they could only see me now, I could not help laughing outright.

The old chief showed his surprise at this, and still more when I addressed him in his own language, asking permission to speak before the council. This was granted, and the reader may believe I gave them some plain talk. I told them that Little Beaver was my brother; that he had never harmed them; I hoped they would kill me too; I knew I was wasting breath in pleading for my friend, so I told them I would never join their tribe; and if they did not kill me, I would run away the first chance I had.

They listened without interruption, until I had concluded, when the old chief said that the decision had been made, and could not be changed. Beaver was conducted to the guard-room, and the old chief led me away to a tepee adjoining his own. He told me I was free to go where I pleased in the village, but would not be allowed to leave it.

I had no opportunity of speaking to my friend that day, nor until the following morning, when he was led out to torture. He hid me good-by; asked me to go to his tribe and say that he died like a brave, and not like a squaw; and asked me to shoot him myself before they commenced the torture. Some of them heard his last request, and my gun was put out of my reach. Could I have had my rifle for a single moment I would have saved my friend from torture by shooting him myself; but that I was powerless to help him, and bidding him good-by once more, I walked away to be cut of sight of their cruelty.

After my companion was thus brutally burned to death, the old chief came to me one day and tried to induce me to join his tribe. He even offered me his daughter in marriage, and said that he would make me a wealthy man; and that in the course of time I would take his place as the head chief of the tribe. But not all the charms of his daughter, who was one of the prettiest of Indian maidens, nor the temptations of wealth and power, could induce me to become an Indian.

Here was presented to me a life of independence and ease, if not luxury; and many a white man even in the States, would consider himself very fortunate in receiving such an offer. Often, now, I look back upon this occasion as one of the many opportunities I have thrown away; when wealth was laid aside for freedom. And, though nearly three years passed before I finally made my escape, I find myself longing for the freedom of the western wilds.

Looking out of my window to-day, and watching the snow whirled through the streets; the pedestrians muffled to the eyes in warm furs, I wonder that I ever could pass so many just such days out of doors and alone in the wilds of the Northwest. The merry jingle of the bells in the street below, and far out where the prairie and winter are battling for the mastery, are pleasant sounds to me; but I would so like to hear the shout that would go up in that Indian village if I could only drop down there as the snow-flake falls upon my window-sill!

A Woman's Hand:

OR,

THE MYSTERY OF MEREDITH PLACE.

BY SEELEY REGESTER.

AUTHOR OF "THE DEAD LETTER," ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.—CONTINUED.

In the course of two or three hours Miss Miller grew calm and fell asleep under the effects of the anodynes given; Lillian then dismissed the maid, who said to her:

"Better take an hour's rest yourself, mademoiselle. It's a long time yet till breakfast, though it's broad daylight."

She did lie down on the lounge, but the scene of the night had been too exciting, and she could only act it over and over in thought, as she lay there, sleepless, watching the wan face on the pillow.

"How she has changed in a year! She used to be so handsome—and so strong. She worries far more about that miserable money than I. I wish she would give it up—as I have! But no, she has found it at last—there is the proof! Oh, how can I wait for her to waken up and explain! Now I shall send for Cousin Joe. Yes, if he will not come to me, I will go to him and tell him the truth. My poor, brave, faithful governess! She told me, at the time her arm was broken, that some one was here who knew where the box was, but who dared not convey it away; but that she had not yet discovered who this person was. Now, doubtless, she had seen and recognized him. This wretched mystery will be at an end."

She waited impatiently, but the patient slept on heavily, and the wretched thoughts varied, although always centering about the same subject, tears dropping as the image of her father came back vividly, and a blush drying them on her cheeks as another picture arose, embodying some scene in the future.

When the rising-bell rung she dressed herself, seeing that Miss Miller was not disturbed; she was one of the first to enter the breakfast room, and had to answer the inquiries of all. Inez gave her a singular look as she came in with her fair double, but asked no question, nor referred to her little part in the night's performance. Arthur took a seat by Lillian, making several inquiries about his sister. She really pitied him, he was so anxious, and had so little appetite for his breakfast; and making an effort to show her friendliness, she evidently succeeded in lightening his uneasiness, so that he appeared less restrained as the meal progressed. Inez's eyes continued to flash lightning across the table; Lillian noticed something peculiar in her manner; but, as the Cuban was in the habit of letting her feelings be known without delay, and as she said less than usual, Lillian concluded that she must have misread her expression.

When she returned to her room, too eager to find her friend awake to care to linger with the pleasure-seekers below, Miss Miller lay quietly staring at the wall.

"If you had not disturbed me last night," she said, listlessly, "I suppose I should have got along well enough. It is the sudden shock which affects the nerves."

"I did not waken you. It was your stumbling which did it. Will you have anything, dear Miss Miller?"

"A cup of coffee, as strong as they please to make it."

Lily rung the bell and made her request; the coffee came, with a slice of toast; was drank, and the servant sent away; then the patient appeared disposed to sleep again.

Lillian hesitated whether to broach the subject, and, ever considerate of others, finally concluded to keep silence until the other spoke of her own free will.

"If you feel inclined to rest, I will go down."

"Go, if you wish, child; I do feel more quiet than I have in days. Doubtless rest is what I most need."

She went out to find all the ladies of the house gathered in Bertha's room, in a high state of excitement over the arrival, that morning, by express, of the wedding dress and bonnet. The

dress was of white moire-antique, rich, heavy and lustrous; the bonnet as "lovely a thing" as the female heart could desire. All were lavish in their praise. Nothing would do but Bertha must try on the robe, which she did, and found the fit as perfect as the material. Drawing her fine figure to its full height, the bride-elect looked at the beautiful image reflected in the glass, with a smile half-proud, half-tender. She could hardly have been other than satisfied, which her expression confessed her to be.

"What a charming bride she will make," murmured Lillian, turning to Inez for sympathy in her admiration.

The Cuban was watching Bertha so intently that she did not hear the remark. Lillian was surprised at the expression of Inez's countenance, whose usually rich brunette color had taken on almost a greenish tinge; her eyes had grown small and dull—the lids lay across them in a straight line, from under which gleamed a single sparkle of light—if ever malice and jealousy were written so that "he who runs may read," they were written there. Lily, poor child, could think of nothing but a serpent the moment before it strikes; she felt terrified, and hid her hand on Inez's arm, who started, turning to her with an unpleased expression.

"I asked you if you did not consider her a beautiful bride?" repeated Lily, embarrassed, she knew not why.

Yes, certainly—she will make a beautiful bride—if she ever becomes one. I wish Arthur could see her this coming under the full moon, and go to the window to admire the subject of Bertha's perfection.

"I wish Inez was not so ill-governed," mused Lillian, not for the first time. "She keeps herself unhappy. Why did she say—'If she ever becomes one'?"

Once or twice in the course of the morning she stole back to look at Miss Miller, who had fallen asleep the second time, and, although very pale, was enjoying a profound and refreshing slumber. Her interest in the finale of the sleep-walking story was so keen as to tempt her to rouse the sleeper, but she restrained herself each time and went away; however, being too agitated by suspense and painful memories, to enjoy any society, she went the second time, down the deserted avenue, and, coming under the full warmth of high-noon, in search of a shaded nook in the old arbor, where she could be alone. She had been seated but a little while over a book which she held, but did not read, when Arthur Miller came sauntering along, and entered the arbor. He started when he found it occupied, removed the cigar from his lips, asked permission to share the bench, and when she had given it, threw himself down with a weary sigh.

"Is it the heat?" asked the young lady, with a smile.

"I believe it is, in part. Life is very unsatisfactory, taken as a whole. It is too warm, or too cold; too bright, or too dull; too wet, or too dry; and as the weather is, so is everything else. Poor human nature is enslaved to death half the time."

"I hardly expected such a view of life from your lips, just at present, Mr. Miller."

"Oh, I'm not without my due share of troubles, I assure you. I am marrying a woman richer than you, and she's not the most charming arrangement for a man of any spunk."

"Then why do you do it?" his listener was about to ask, but checked herself, betraying her surprise by her expression.

"People who give credit for any real love in the matter, you see. If Miss Chateaubriand were twice as beautiful and twice as lovable, I should have the credit of marrying her for her money."

"Which you certainly have, in my mind," thought Lillian, saying nothing.

"And then, there is Annie. She's not the woman she used to be, Miss Meredith. And these somnambulic tricks of hers worry me more than I am willing to confess to any one."

Lillian looked up at the pettish, ill-humored tone, adding, "I am so afraid that she will come to serious harm. She might have killed herself last night. I was getting so nervous, at night, I start at every sound, imagining Annie has stepped out of a second-story window, or fallen off the roof," and he forced a laugh.

Lillian had remarked this very nervousness, and sleepless look in him, and now attributed it to the cause he gave.

"I will propose to her to go home with me, if she feels as if she should rest better there," she said.

"It is but a few days now, at all events, till the great affair will be over; then I shall try and persuade her to try a change of scene for a few days, Miss Miller, until our school until the twentieth of September."

"A few days, I know—but suppose she should break her neck in the meantime?"

Lillian did not like his hard tone, nor ill-concealed impatience—it looked far more to her as if he did not wish to be annoyed by his sister's exploits, than like any deep interest in her health. So she remained silent, and he sat there moodily, until the lunch-bell summoned them to the house, when he immediately resumed the gay manner which won him his way in society, offered her his arm, and conducted her to the dining-room as airily as if the weather was always paradisaical.

His sister came down to lunch looking better than she had in some days, was congratulated on her recovery, made some light suggestions regarding the ornamentation of the rooms for the approaching festivities, and made, as she always did, the power of her talent felt, whatever she said or suggested.

"I am as jealous as I can be of Lillian Meredith," said Bertha, "and I give you fair warning that when I get to keeping house, I shall quarrel with you for the possession of your treasure. I should never have ventured to promise to marry if I had not supposed you could be coaxed to live with me, Miss Miller."

"Perhaps I can, in due time—that is, if you and Arthur do not quarrel. I could never exist under the same roof with a matrimonial couple who brought their differences to me to settle."

"If he is good, and mild, and always lets me have my own way, I shall not quarrel with him," said Bertha.

Lillian listened to the badinage without hearing it; she was waiting for the hour of the afternoon siesta, when she should have her opportunity of speaking to Miss Miller alone.

It came at last, when the two again were in their chamber.

"You were broken of your rest so much last night, Lily, you ought to take a long sleep this afternoon."

"I am going back home, you know, before dinner. I shall start as soon as the sun is a little lower. But oh, Miss Miller, how can you think I can sleep until you have told me all?"

"Told you all?"

"Yes—where the box is—where you got the gold."

"Where I got the gold?"

"And who it was that was taking it! Now that you know all, surely, this fearful mystery must come to the light."

"What are you talking about, my child?"

Each looked at the other in doubt and surprise.

"Miss Miller, when you came back to this room, last night, your hand was full of bars of gold, precisely like those my father once showed me. You called me and told me you knew the meaning of the figure eight—that you had found the box, and brought those ingots in proof."

"Lily, I remember no more of it than as if it had never been."

"Then you cannot lead me to the box?" cried Lillian, dismayed, overwhelmed with disappointment.

"I cannot, I remember nothing. Tell me all I said, please, my darling child, this moment."

Lillian recounted what had passed.

"Did I not mention the name of the person whom I followed?" eagerly.

"No, not once."

"Let me look at the ingots, Lily."

Lillian went to her bureau, lifted the lace she had hastily thrown over the gold, but the ingots were not where she had hidden them!

"Some one has been here and taken them," she cried, as she hastily examined the drawer, taking out every article.

Then she went to the next, although positive she had placed them in the upper drawer; so on, through the bureau, and every nook and corner, possible and impossible, as persons will, when they have lost things in the vain hope that memory is at fault, and that they will "turn up" somewhere. But the ingots had disappeared utterly—strangely as they had come, they had vanished still more strangely, and the two women could only look at each other with vague speculation in their faces.

CHAPTER XX.

"CHECKMATE TO YOUR KING."

"PERHAPS you dreamed the whole matter," suggested Miss Miller, as she and Lily stood at the window of the lower, looking over the broad landscape despondently.

They had taken advantage of the quiet presiding over the house at the hour of the afternoon siesta, to ascend to the tower-room and search for anything which might prove a clue to what had happened the previous night, but more innocent-looking place never was subjected to such close scrutiny. The plain, small square room had no nook where a thimble could be hidden—at least, none such appeared to the eyes of the two women.

Sophie had caused to be spread, looking for some trap-door, or board which had been cut to lift from some cavity between the floors; but nothing rewarded the examination. There were no drawers on three sides—on the fourth hung the map of which we have spoken, against a plain, bare wall of common plaster laid directly upon the squared stones of which the tower was built.

You said just before you awoke, that you were not sure whether it was up or down you ought to go."

"In the cellar, I suppose, under the coal," the governess spoke lightly, to cover her chagrin.

"Oh, what if you had come here alone, and fallen from this open window?" said Lillian, with a shudder, looking down at the green grass and gravelled paths below.

"I tell you, solemnly, that if I had, and had been dashed to death in an instant, I could ask for no happier fate."

"Why, my dear, dear Miss Miller, don't speak in that manner! I thought I was very sad, and that I could never be happy again when my dear father—when, you know—how terrible it was!—and I am very wretched still at times—about poor cousin Joe. But, I cannot say that I covet a death like that—ah, no, you make me tremble when you speak and look so."

"The young can bear anything," said the governess drily; "like the springing grass, they bend to the wind, but when it is ripe and brittle, once crushed it rises no more."

"I know, dear friend, you loved poor papa, and you will never, never get over his dreadful death. Why should fate ordain that he should meet that foolish, willful girl, who had not the heart, nor the sense to love him as he deserved?"

"If he had come home unmarried, all would have been so different! The other thing might not have happened—and he would have been certain to do so."

"No other thing might not have happened—could not have happened," said the governess slowly; "you are right, then, Lillian."

The subject, usually so carefully avoided, was too much for the self-possession of the orphaned girl, who, clinging to her friend's waist, and wept so bitterly, tears as do good to those who shed them; but, the single icy drop on the side of the other woman were of those which, pressed from the heart, leave it dry.

"I must go home," said Lillian, when they had stood some time—"will you return with me, as Arthur wishes?"

"I think not—at least, not to-night. I have promised Mrs. Chateaubriand, and I may not have another of these attacks in some time. Arthur is too easily fretted about his dear sister."

Was she speaking in sarcasm? Her companion looked up, but could not tell; she was half afraid of her governess, at times, such a change had lately come over her.

"Well, I must call Inez, as I go down. She ought to go home with me. She is here too much, I think—seeing we are not placed so as to return those hospitalities."

"Oh, she does not regard herself from that standpoint any longer. She is Don Miguel's cousin, and if Sophie should be successful in her husband-hunting, they will be related."

"The Don is not a butterfly, Miss Miller."

"Truly, I believe he is something a trifle better. I dwell on his perfections, while there was any hope of your appreciating him. But I will think you will take Inez home with you. There she goes across the fields, in the direction of Gramme Hooker's."

"Alone, too?"

"She is so benevolent that she is going to do the old woman a service, and her modesty prevents her bringing along her left hand to know what her right hand does."

"I do wonder what errand takes her there so frequently."

"Are you sure Mrs. Hooker is a conscientious woman?"

"Quite; but why do you ask?"

"Don't puzzle your poor little tired brain about that, child. Come, we will go down, and I will walk with you a little on your way home. I need the air to get rid of those indolent annoyances."

The two walked along the quiet road, sweet from last night's rain, across which long shadows were beginning to stretch. As they slowly sauntered toward the village, one of Mr. Chateaubriand's buggies passed them, with Arthur Miller and his carriage on the back seat.

"I'm going to this five o'clock express," he said, as the driver paused a moment at his bidding. "Will be back to-morrow at the same hour. Better stay with Miss Meredith to-night, Annie."

"I did not know you were to go down again before the twentieth."

"Oh, yes. I've not selected my wedding present yet for the bride. That is a very important matter. I shall give to-morrow to my selection. Shall it be a diamond bracelet, Annie?"

"Better suit your gifts to your means," she said, coldly.

"Precisely. I made a thousand dollars by a lucky stroke, the week before I came out. Would that too much to expend on an article of so much importance?"

"I advise you to be prudent," was the response, and Arthur, laughing and brilliant, drove on, the envied of all who saw him.

"It feels to me as if there was a storm in the air," remarked Miss Miller, stopping in her walk, a little later, and looking about her with a wandering glance.

"We had the storm last night. The air, now, is like crystal, and the sky a cloudless blue."

"But I feel it, I tell you. Since my health is in this peculiar state I am a perfect barometer. My spirits have fallen a good many degrees in so many minutes. Something is going to happen. Perhaps there will be an accident on the railroad to-night."

"Oh, I often feel that way—and nothing ever comes of it. Don't go any further with me, or you'll lose your dinner."

The friends parted. Miss Miller returned to

Moreth Place, ate her dinner in the most hum-drum fashion; spent the evening in giving countenance to folly, as usual; retired to her room, and slept a dreamless sleep, from which she did not arise to midnight excursions.

The next day her brother returned from the city, and was welcomed with delight by the affectionate and anxious darlings who knew what his errand had been. No storm had broken the serenity of the summer sky, and no rail had broken on the road to startle the world with an accident. Something had happened, nevertheless, during that brief trip, of great import to the most of that joyous company. They did not perceive it now, however—least of all was it suspected by him whom it most concerned.

That evening, when the bride-elect came to dinner, she found a parcel under her napkin; she untied the little box and brought to light a bracelet of diamonds and emeralds fit for a princess's acceptance.

"Allow me," said Arthur, clasping it about the snowy wrist, and, as the lady pursued her dinner, the light of the jewels flashed little rainbows over her plate.

"I declare, Inez, your eyes are as green as these emeralds," exclaimed Bertha, as, trifling with her dessert, she chanced to look up at Mrs. Meredith, sitting opposite.

"I am blinder," answered Inez, dropping them. "You are blinded by what you have been looking at. No one, I dare say, would give as much for my eyes as for your emeralds."

"Take, I assure you, Mrs. Meredith," simpered a youth, who, being selected to attend the third bridemaid, had nothing to do in the meantime but to pay her compliments. "Tiffany has nothing at all to be compared with those starry orbs—"

"Hearts," cried Don Miguel; "starry orbs! fine! Where did you find that rare and original comparison?"

"In my head," responded the youth, putting a spoonful of ice-cream in his mouth.

"What a pity we are not all engaged," remarked Sophie, pointing at Arthur, but without a swift glance at Don Miguel.

"I suppose it is the bridal presents and the new dresses that induce half of you to place yourselves in that enviable position," said the Don.

"Of course. The little god would kneel in vain, if he did not come with his hands full of jewels and 'promises to pay.' If he could not order a bouquet, select an ornament, and had no ear for opera music, he ought to be banished to the desert."

"It is better to have a cousin than to be engaged," said Inez, and, letting the white muslin of her flowing sleeve fall back from her brown, but smooth and exquisitely shaped arm, she betrayed a bracelet much finer than Bertha's—costly, rich, and magnificent.

With him, when he made his last declaration to Lillian, as a betrothal bond, if she should accept him. He was thinking, now, that one woman, at least, had withstood the temptation of wealth and ease, and her image rose before him all the more attractively in contrast with the gay creatures who were telling the truth about themselves, with the prettiest air of being only in sport.

"Oh, Inez," cried Sophie, "you never showed us that before! You little darling, how become it is in your eyes! I always told you your hand and arm were perfect."

The Don had been watching her to mark the impression made by the ornament; if she had shown envy or malice, he would have turned lightly from Sophie, as he had from so many other women, with her evident freedom from coquetry, her good nature in admiring Inez, and pleasure in the latter's possession of the jewel, raised her many degrees in his respect. She was not Lillian; she was not his heart, nor the sense to love him as he deserved; but, she was an amiable as well as a pretty girl, and he gave her a glance that had a thought in it, as he said:

"Inez must not claim the bracelet forever. I told her it was only lent to her. I intend to imitate Mr. Miller in my final use of it."

"I don't wear it! I got tired of it, before you claim it," responded his cousin, while Sophie felt a glow in her heart and a blush on her cheek, she hardly knew why.

Miss Miller leaned back in her chair and looked at Inez. She was thinking of the time when a certain nobleman, in the city of London, was man, with an intellect kindled by communion with that of a man of genius, and a heart alive with the best love which such a man can draw forth, decked himself in velvet and jewels to lead a young woman with the flushed cheek and sparkling eye, was this self which sat here now, sallow, stony, and indifferent. She recalled the moment when the slender, dark-eyed Cuban girl had emerged from the stage and she heard Don Miguel in his wife's ear, "Oh, but she had reason to hate even more than she despised! Yes, as she sat and watched her, at the table, darting those looks at the bride-elect, which Bertha had declared were 'green,' a cold fear of her crept through her contempt."

It is too late for that. Inez held some secret power to injure, over which she exulted.

Lillian had not, in describing the events of the night when she stayed with her, mentioned having found Inez in the lower hall, for the incident had little importance to her as to pass out of her mind. Had she mentioned it to Miss Miller, the latter would have had some clue to the power held by the woman with whom her brother had trifled.

"She is plotting mischief," thought the governess, as she entered Inez's room, and, as she knew what she was doing, she would have been glad to keep it one hour, should she have discovered it. It is more probable that she will stab him with the little poniard which I saw her raise on him once, than attempt a more complicated revenge."

"Is it too late for that?" she said, as she entered the midst of these trifles. I believe I will go and see Mother Hooker."

Stealing from the dining-room without attracting particular attention, she threw a rapid glance over her shoulder, off, in the growing twilight, through the garden on into the field path which led through the woods to Gramme's. Her head was hot; the cool air felt grateful to her burning face; she walked rapidly on into the dim woods, where she could have her full measure of the murmuring shadows. The secret she carried, which pressed ever heavier into her heart, was almost unbearable this evening. Those gay and thoughtless friends whom she had left behind were to her like children playing on the brink of a precipice, and, at the awful danger, she vividly before her imagination, she shrieked aloud. A thousand piercing echoes answered her, and she screamed again, shrilly and long.

"It is a relief—I am afraid of insanity, some days," she murmured. "Who would think me delirious in courage? They call me strong-minded, a natural leader—yet, here I shrink like the veriest coward. If I had confronted the danger at first, seized it by the throat, choked, silenced it, should not now be overmastered by it. I concede my weakness while the wrong grows. Oh, Arthur! Oh, Lillian! I am afraid now that a hand less kind and more just than mine has taken the rain and is driving me on to ruin!"

She sat at a table on a log beside the path, listening to the last twittering notes of sleep birds, the mournful cry of the whippoorwill which had answered her wild scream, and the rustle of the tall trees moving lightly in the western wind, then resumed her walk, urged by the fear that Gramme would be in bed if she delayed her call any later.

Gramme was studying out her evening chapter of the New Testament by the light of a talow dip, when Miss Miller surprised her by appearing in the open door. It was so warm in the house I wanted to get out of it; and as I strolled this way I made up my mind I have wanted answered for some time."

"Take a chair, Miss Miller. I'm glad to see you, but I reckon you'd better be careful about tramping all alone after dark. I'm nigh about sartin I heard a painter screech in them woods just a little while ago—though they do say there's been none seen in these parts for twenty years."

"Thank you; I'll sit on the door-step, gramme. I dare say it was a screech-owl which disturbed you. There are no panthers in Meredith wood—unless they be human panthers," sotto voce.

Then screech-owls do make a dreadful noise; they sound awful lonesome in the woods at night. It may be. It may be. But you ain't so timid as most women-folks, Miss Miller. 'Pears to me you don't look well lately; better let 'em up some herb-tea or bitters, hadn't ye?"

"You can't medicate to a mind diseased, gramme," replied the lady, sadly.

"Nay, that's so. What is it you want me to do, that you don't know better'n I, Miss Miller?"

"The object of Mrs. Meredith's visits to you."

"Oh! Well, sartain, they're shakely wuth inquirin' into, and g'amme laughed.

"It's nothing very bad, if you laugh about it."

"That's so, child; you're right. She'll never do any harm, that I'm sartin an' dancin' won't be too foolish. I don't know as I ought to tell on her, though, as she's come to me in confidence."

"If you think it will do no harm, and that you are justified in keeping it, I shall ask no more."

"Oh land! I reckon it makes no difference, one way or t'other. She jest comes to get me to make love-powders for your brother, and I hummer her, to keep her from going to the 'potheary,' or somewhere, where she'll make herself ridiculous."

"I surprised as much, gramme, and I'm obliged to you for being so discreet with her. She has her foreign ways, and we must humor them, I suppose. Her cousin will soon take her off her beam, which will be a relief to us. Did she ever ask you for anything really dangerous?"

Mother Hooker hesitated; her eyes fell before the keen glance fixed upon her, but she raised them again as she said:

"If she had, you might know she wouldn't get it here. The low porch, at the end of the garden, jest lectur' her on her sin an' dancin'—she's most like the heathen, that poor child is, and I tell you I've preached to her powerful."

Miss Miller was just as well satisfied with this answer as if it had been more explicit. After a little more chat on the old woman's wants and ailments, she bade her good-night, and returned upon her lonesome route. The faint glimmer of a moon in its first quarter struggled through the wood, making it so that she had small difficulty in finding her way back. She was no coward, as far as being out alone was concerned, and crossed the field as carelessly as if it had been broad daylight. Entering by that back gate, through which so many of my adventures had been made the previous summer, she strolled on to the arbor and still feeling disinclined to the prospect of company, she turned aside and entered. As she did so she was startled almost into an exclamation; but her long habit of self-control stood her in good stead, and she said nothing. The low beam of the moon against the face of a man sitting there as if waiting for somebody. The lady could see him with sufficient clearness to know that he was a stranger. Before she could decide whether to turn away or to greet him, he arose, saying:

"I guess it's all right, ma'am. We're on the right track now, certainly. I followed him all day yesterday, as you advised, and I found out what you said I would."

"Found out what?" Miss Miller's lips trembled, but she steadied her voice and tried to disguise it; the other, however, immediately detected his mistake.

"Beg your pardon, ma'am," said he; "I mistook you for the housekeeper. There's a fellow been senting the house and vegetables, and she set me on to watching him."

With that he passed by her, and went whistling on over the lawn, to the front gate, and out upon the road. Miss Miller would have taken his story for granted, but as she went up the rear steps to the porch, she met Inez coming down, and knowing how superstitious and timid she was, wondered at her going out alone.

"Would you like company?" asked the governess.

"Oh, no, thank you. I'm only going for a rosebud for my hair. Mr. Beckwith has stolen the one I was wearing," and she hurried on toward the rose-bushes beyond which stood the arbor.

He's a thief himself, you may be sure," said that personage, when she had told her story.

I never authorized nobody to watch for thieves. It's like he's after the fruit himself; or worse—maybe he's a burglar—scurvy of the stivitation. I'm goin' to send Mick out to hunt him off the place, or I shan't close an eye this night. Like as not he's from the city, or he's come as a bodyguard over that silver which missus was so foolish as to send for. I told her it wouldn't be a safe in this country place, where there isn't a policeman to save your life."

"Don't worry too much; he will not be apt to come back to-night, especially if he sees Mick looking out with a lantern. He will naturally suppose that we are on our guard. I think, if I were in your place, I would not disturb the family with it; there is probably not much in it, and if Mick goes out and looks about the place, and you fasten up carefully, it will be all that is necessary."

"All right," assented the housekeeper, but with the lady who gave the advice it was not all right.

When she entered the parlors Inez was there sitting with Mr. Beckwith, who was to be one of the groomsmen. Arthur and Bea were at the piano, Sophie and Don Miguel walking up and down the room, arm-in-arm, Mr. and Mrs. Chateaubriand playing chess; the terrors which beset her, and which gave her the haunted, nervous, expectant look, becoming habitual to her, did not come with her in full force into this cheerful company. Yet she knew they were there, like wolves at the door, ready to spring upon her the moment she went forth, and she was almost surprised that every one was not as aware of their ugly existence as she was. She gazed at the festive groups about her as one does at a fairy spectacle which he knows will soon dissolve.

"Oh, you are here, are you?" said the master of the house, looking up as she sighed. "I've been wanting you to play a game with me. You understand chess much better than Mrs. Chateaubriand."

"Yes, please do take my place, Miss Miller. The idea of playing chess with the thermometer at ninety!"—she lay across from the table, and dropped languidly into an arm-chair.

"One game, then, Mr. Chateaubriand," said Miss Miller, "and let it decide my fate!"

"In what way, ma'am? Has any one been proposing for, or disposing of, you? If so, you must play cautiously. It won't do to be reckless in these matters."

"No, it will not. I shall play my best." She did not smile; on the contrary, she seemed very much in earnest, and the host, who was distinguished for his skill, and a great lover of the game, set to work to arrange the men, with a keen enjoyment in the consciousness that he was to have an opponent worthy of his steel.

The delicate lady of the mansion grew tired of watching the board, fell asleep, woke up, and excused herself from the party, with a warning to her daughters to be in their beds by eleven o'clock.

Eleven o'clock came, and the gentlemen went away, the young ladies retired, laughing at papa and Miss Miller, still bent over their first game—now wary, watchful, designing—the other obstinate, fighting long on the edge of every lost field.

The house had been long silent when the old clock struck twelve, and the gentleman, rising from his seat, cried with a smile:

"Checkmate to your king, Miss Miller!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 385.)

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POETIC OBESITY.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

I am a growing evil, sure,
There's no doubting that;
It is the flat of my fate—
I'm fated to be fat.

I'll never marry in the world,
Since 'tis the worst of woes;
I've just been told by Addie Poe
For reasons adios.

I gazed for Miss McFerrison,
She had such raven eyes;
But she did not *infatuate*,
And so disdained my sighs.

Miss Minks discarded me, too, soon,
And spurned my offerings;
Although beside her she averred
All other men were small.

Miss Jams was twenty, and a blonde;
To marry she said "Nay!"
She never would be bosomed, besides,
I'd have too much my weight.

Miss Millison refused my love
When her dear smile I sought;
The reason that she gave was that
Beside me she'd be naught.

Another intimated strong
That my devotion must stop,
For though I was a humble man
I was too much puffed up.

I asked if I could occupy
A place within her mind;
She said the necessary space
Would be too small to find.

Another turned her head away
When I began to woo;
She said, "You don't amount to much
Though there is much of you."

Another very strongly thought
That I might recant my love,
Because she said I was too great
For any one to love.

And then I tried a host of things
To make myself grow small,
By which my purse was much reduced—
My person not so tall.

And still the worst thing of it all
That causes me to frown
Is, while the fattest, yet I am
The poorest man in town.

The Flyaway Afloat:

OR,

YANKEE BOYS 'ROUND THE WORLD.

BY C. D. CLARK.

AUTHOR OF "YANKEE BOYS IN CEYLON,"
"CAMP AND CANOE," "ROD AND RIFLE,"
"THE SEAL-HUNTERS," ETC.

VII.

CHASE OF THE URANG—A DESPERATE STRUGGLE.

"Now, gentlemen," said the Rajah, "I don't reckon you'll be long out of business, so let's meander on into the woods and see what we can see. We'll raise the urang as soon as possible, and then I'll let you know. But don't say so to my men, or there would be bloodshed. The darn fools like me, somehow."

Already the Bomi were engaged in burying the dead, but the small band of choice hunters selected by the Rajah took the advance, and led them at a rapid pace through the forest. And such a forest as it was! The growth was simply wonderful, for in this island are found some of the most remarkable trees to be seen upon the face of the earth. The baobab, the liquidambar and other remarkable forest trees reared their stately heads in air, and the broad leaves of the talipot swayed to and fro before their eyes.

"It's a great kentry, gentlemen," declared Saul—"a mighty kentry, and if you was to put it into the hands of native-born Yankees, twenty years hence you'd see something that would make your eyes stick out. But here; this ain't urang hunting."

He turned to one of the natives and cried out something in the language of the Bomi. The man nodded gravely and at once issued his orders to the natives. Twenty or thirty men disappeared in the woods and scattered in every direction. For a time not a word was spoken, and the party awaited in perfect silence, looking in the direction from which the sounds which came to them told that the beaters were closing in, and driving everything before them. "There goes an old man," cried Will. "Call him in, some one; he might get hurt."

Saul gave utterance to a delighted shout.

"Old man, says you? That's the old man we are arter; that's the urang!"

Two or three hundred yards away, crossing an opening, was a bent and decrepit figure that of an ugly native past the middle age; at least, so it seemed to the boys. But, Saul knew otherwise, for the creature they saw was the one known in America as the orang-utan, the animal which, before the gorilla, has most human characteristics. He was running across an open space, uttering loud and piercing cries, evidently as a signal.

The signal was quickly answered, and four more such figures appeared, another male, a female, and two small ones, scarcely larger than an infant, who ran through the long grass rapidly, and dived into the thicket of the woods.

"Hurrah!" shouted Will. "After them, boys, but take one of the little fellows alive if you can; I want him."

"Take care!" warned the Rajah. "Once get a urang in a corner and he'll fight like a pisen cuss."

The boys never heard him, but at once stretched away in pursuit, bobbing under the swinging boughs, with their guns ready for a shot. The small game which abounded scattered away at their approach without an attempt on the part of any of them to fire or strike. The urang was their game, and nothing else now could tempt them.

Ned was the first of all who had luck. Being a rapid runner he was soon in advance of the rest, passing rapidly through the opening between the great trees. He had got his eyes upon the smaller male of the two they had seen, and by rapid running separated him from his companions. Strange to say, the creature did not take to trees; he seemed to know there was no safety for him there, and that, if he could not elude his pursuer, he was doomed. As he scuttled through the opening, his long arms swinging and his body half-stooping he presented a strange appearance. The creature was heading for a heavy growth of underbrush, into which, if he once plunged, it would be next to impossible to follow him, and Ned, slackening his pace, prepared his rifle for a shot, when there started up before the creature a couple of half-naked Bomi, who waved their arms in the air and shouted. With a half-human cry the urang wheeled and came flying back, flourishing his long arms in the air, and evidently driven to desperation.

Ned drew up his rifle and pulled. Under ordinary circumstances he would have been sure of his aim, but as he had to admit, "it was too much like shooting at a man," so his hand trembled. He did not miss, it is true, but the bullet, instead of passing through the head, as he intended, passed through the huge ear of the wild creature.

The wound seemed to drive the game half-mad, and flourishing his arms like a windmill, he drove straight at Ned. But the Bomi rushed in with their spears, fearing for the safety of the boy.

Ned was not at all frightened at the furious appearance of the now ferocious creature; so clubbing his rifle, he delivered a sudden and heavy jabbing blow, which drove the urang several paces backward. Before it could recover Ned had his revolver in his hand, and when it again charged, the weapon cracked twice in rapid succession. At the second discharge the urang leaped into the air, and fell dead in its tracks, shot through the brain. As

Ned advanced to look at the fallen foe he heard a smothered cry for help through the woods to the right, and grasping his revolver tightly, sprang away in the direction of the sound.

Will, from the very first, had kept his eyes upon one of the young urangs. The boy was full of a naturalist's enthusiasm, and had promised a friend that he would bring him something of this kind, if possible, for his museum. If he could take it alive he counted upon rare sport in its training.

He was next to Ned in the chase, and when the game separated, he had taken up the chase of the boy which had the young urang in charge. But they had plunged into the woods, and quickly mounted a great tree, where they lay concealed in the branches, while the sound of pursuit swept by on every side.

Will waited, for he had a great fancy for hunting alone, and even his adventure with the elephant, when he took refuge in the hollow tree, had not cured him of the propensity. So he stood under the tree, and allowed the rest to pass him, giving no sign to indicate that he had any knowledge of the hiding-place of the urangs.

It was a rather selfish act, and as selfishness is apt to do, it brought its reward in a shape which was far from pleasant to the boy.

"Oh, yes," he muttered, as he balanced his Winchester, "here's the tool that will fix you, my boys; you've got to come out of that, you know."

He began to walk about the large tree, with his eyes fixed upon the leafy canopy.

The apes had hidden themselves securely, and in spite of his keen eyes he could not see them.

"Oh, hang the luck," he thought. "Come out and show yourselves, and be somebody, you fools!"

Probably if the devilry which belongs naturally to the ape families, had not showed itself, the boy might have been disappointed in his object; but unfortunately the tree bore a species of nut, peculiar to these islands, covered with spike-like projections, and as large as a coconut.

Seeing the boy underneath, one of the urangs could not resist the temptation to drop one of the nuts upon his head!

It had no sooner occurred to the urang than the thought was executed, and the great nut came down, true as a die, and alighted fairly upon the head of the unfortunate Will.

Only one thing, the stiff-crowned hat which he wore, saved him from serious injury, for the spines were broken in passing through the cap; but, even as it was, he came to the earth with a bump, while a loud chattering from above told that the urangs were exulting over the success of the "drop."

They now began to rain the nuts down so rapidly that Will crept out of the way, but not soon enough to prevent one of the nuts from scoring his right leg, cutting three deep gashes as neatly as if it had been done with a knife.

To say that he was angry would be putting it mildly. He was furious beyond measure, and grasping his rifle again, he got up slowly, with his eye fixed upon the tree, and put the rifle to his shoulder. At the same moment one of the urangs, holding one of the nuts by a spike, looked out from among the branches. Will stepped nearer, to tempt him, and the creature crawled out further on the branch, holding the "baby" on one arm, and balancing the nut for a toss.

At this moment Will discharged his rifle, taking a more careful aim than he had ever taken in his life.

Crack!

The urang dropped the nut and made a wild clutch at the branches above his head, and then came plunging down, turning once in the air and falling flat upon his back, with the little creature still close to his chest. Will ran up and caught up the young urang, the prize for which he had suffered so much, and at the price of a sharp scratch or two succeeded in binding it closely, hand and foot.

The little fiend fought fiercely, and uttered piercing cries.

Will paid no attention to this, but completed his work, and was about to rise, when, with the savage yell peculiar to the ape, the mother alighted upon his back. Will whirled quickly and fastened his right hand upon her throat, and a desperate struggle began.

In the course of his wanderings it had been the fortune of Will Wade to meet with many wild adventures, but never, perhaps, in all that time, had he met a fiercer foe than this, mother fighting in defense of her young.

In his first alarm he uttered a cry for help, although he did not look for any. The hunters had all passed, long ago, and were no doubt far away in the forest, beating it for the lost game. He must depend upon himself, and even if he conquered, it must be at some cost.

The sharp claws were working furiously, and the creature showed wonderful strength. If he could have reached his knife, a single thrust would have ended it, but he had dropped it while engaged in tying the young urang, and it was now out of his reach. Again and again the sharp claws tore through his flesh, until he almost began to despair, for the urang was tearing furiously at the hand fastened on her throat, clashing her white teeth together savagely, and uttering the most savage yells. Suddenly the right paw shot down to the earth, and when she raised it she held in her clutch the heavy bowie which Will had dropped!

Of course the creature did not understand the use of the knife, but meant to use it as a club. Holding it as she did, with the edge down, a single blow from the heavy weapon would split his skull like an egg-shell. Will darted up his left hand and caught her by the wrist, but, in doing so, was forced to release his hold upon her throat. Instantly the long teeth were fastened in the flesh of the forearm which clasped her wrist, and in his agony the boy released her and the knife was again raised on high.

At this moment, when there seemed no hope for him, a rush of feet was heard, a revolver cracked so close to him that the powder burnt his tattered sleeve. The jaws of the urang relaxed their grips, the knife dropped from her feeble clutch, and she claded over on the earth in the agonies of death. It was Ned, who, coming to the aid of his brother, had placed his pistol to the ear of his assailant, and shot her through the head.

The rest of the party, hearing the shots, came rushing back, only to find the urang dead. Ned Wade supporting the bleeding form of Will upon his knees, and endeavoring to stanch the flowing blood. It was many a day before the boy was himself again and he had learned a lesson which he would never forget.

Tales Worth Telling.

BY LAUNCE POYNTE.

III. SERGEANT LEAHY THE SWIMMER.

There are many deeds of heroism that the newspapers never hear of, and many are feats of strength and endurance performed by quiet, unknown people that will rival those of professional athletes. The subject of our story is an excellent illustration of the perfection to which bodily exercise can be brought, if a man of intelligence bends his will to becoming first in a specialty.

Thomas Leahy was born in Scotland of Irish parents, about sixty years ago, and still lives in England, as swimming-master to the great public school of Eton, where the young dukes and earls are brought up. Since he was made master, a wonderful change has taken place in the swimming at Eton, so much so that it is said that his pupils can be recognized in any part of the world, by their peculiar grace, ease and rapidity of swimming, as Etonians of Leahy's school. Some of his secrets, and a few of his wonderful exploits are worth telling and hearing.

Like all born athletes, young Leahy, from his

earliest years, was devotedly fond of gymnastics, and averse to other study. Just like all the rest, too, he regrets his want of early education now that it is too late to repair it. As long as the heyday of youth and strength lasts the life of an athlete is pleasant enough; but when such an one gets past his prime, and sees the companions he used to despise as weaklings grown up, prosperous and rich, while he no longer attracts crowds, he is apt to think he has mis-spent his time. In the case of Leahy, however, this is not so, for having been a good, sober, honest fellow all his life, old age is coming on him slowly, amid the respect of his employers, while the Eton boys all adore him.

Young Tom was sent to school early, but he would not learn anything more than reading, writing and a little ciphering, while he was always swimming whenever he got a chance, and was devotedly fond of soldiers, too. At last, when he was about eighteen years old, he left his home suddenly, and enlisted in the 93d Highland Regiment, just as it was leaving England for India. Once in the Highlands, Leahy seemed to be a very different man, and remained in the same regiment for thirty years, never having a bad conduct mark all the time he was there. It was while there, however, that he found cause to be sorry for having neglected his studies. He was a remarkably brave man in battle, and twice behaved with great gallantry that was offered a commission. He was unable to accept it, because he could not pass the examination for officers, and he was obliged to be content with remaining a sergeant all his days.

However, we are not here concerned so much about his bravery as his swimming powers, which were truly extraordinary. When Leahy entered the army he was already a good swimmer, but he soon became a better one. His regiment was first posted at Gibraltar, and while there his favorite amusement was to swim races with the rest of the garrison, when they were off duty.

He very soon was able to beat any one in his regiment, and the officers were so proud of him that they matched him against a famous swimmer of the Rifle Brigade, to swim half a mile out to sea.

Leahy won this match, which was for about twenty-five dollars a side, with such ease that no one else in the garrison dared answer his challenge to swim "any man, black, white or brown, a two-mile race for a hundred pounds."

Soon after he had thus become the champion swimmer at Gibraltar the regiment was ordered to Aden, on the coast of Arabia, by the Red Sea, where it remained in garrison for nearly three years.

Here young Leahy, who was now a corporal, was in command. He had plenty of spare time, and the beautiful sandy beach invited him to swim constantly, while the peculiar clearness of the water and the coral formations at the bottom tempted him to perfect himself in the art of diving, in which he soon became an expert.

One day, when he was alone, he saw a single fish as a swimmer began to spread, and as none of the garrison dare challenge him, they hunted through the country until they found an Arab fisherman, who was said to be able to stay in the water a whole day, and backed him against Leahy for fifty pounds, to swim a two-mile race.

Leahy had heard a good deal of the wonderful powers of savages and wild men generally in the water, and of course felt a little uncomfortable, as they might have some peculiar style of swimming, but he knew nothing as he swam in the ordinary European manner.

However, his officers backed him against Osman the Arab, and one day at noon the two men went down to the beach before a large crowd of people, and struck out for a buoy. It was not long before Leahy was well ahead of the Arab, and every now and then he was afraid the swimmers might get sunstruck.

Some one recommended Leahy to duck his head often and keep it wet, but he declined the advice, and did not even plunge in headforemost.

He mentions one curious fact about this ducking of heads, so often recommended in hot weather to avoid sunstroke. It is that so long as he kept his head dry in swimming he never had a headache, but if he wet his head he always had more or less headache, and he never lets them dry his head, but keeps it wet.

The writer's experience, though, of course, constitutes diffidence.

Well, Leahy and Osman swam straight out to sea, and before they had gone a quarter of a mile the Arab had lost sight of the head of the Arab. He swam in a very different style, very flat and shallow, near the top of the water, with long strokes, making long pauses between the strokes. The Arab swam very deep in the water, nearly perpendicular in fact, with short strokes and pauses. He appeared to labor a little, but his progress was slow. The spectators watched the two heads growing more and more distant, till they were almost out of sight, but they could see the two rowboats that accompanied the swimmers getting further apart every minute, till the furthest had reached the buoy and was hauled in. Leahy had nearly a quarter of a mile ahead. All through the race Leahy continued to gain, and finally reached the beach pretty well tired, thirteen minutes in advance of the Arab. The time Osman came in, the Highlanders were well rested, and taken a glass of beer, and kept the cool of the water from hurting him, and announced himself ready to begin again. This was in answer to Osman's backers, who trusted much to the endurance of their man, and wanted to make a ten-mile match at once.

At last Osman came out of the water, looking as quiet as when he entered it, and apparently quite fresh. It was soon found out, however, that he had enough of it for that day. The wonderful rapidity of Leahy's swimming convinced Osman that he never could beat the Highlander in the longest race. All he could do was to stay in the water for hours.

This race established Leahy as champion of the Red Sea; and therefore, it was not without a little surprise, that soon after he received a challenge from a corporal of his own regiment to swim a mile in the Indian mutiny of 1859, in the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, about a mile from the shore. This corporal was a fine swimmer, but by no means equal to Leahy, and he only made one condition, that he should be allowed to land on the right of the island, while Leahy should take the left.

This was a private match between the two for a guinea a side, and they started one moonlight evening, just after Leahy's match with Osman. At first Leahy was leaving the corporal slowly, then began to gain more rapidly, and thought he had an easy victory before him, when they both began to near the island. The tide was beginning to set out to sea with increasing force, and suddenly Leahy found himself swept out of his course by a current of which he was previously ignorant, running at the rate of seven miles an hour. He was forced to swim with it, and saw that the same current, which formed an eddy on the other side, was taking the corporal straight to the island at the same rapid pace. Then he realized that his challenger had tricked him, and that he was in grave danger.

What was to be done? No boat was near them, and no human being could hope to swim against such a current, not even the champion of Aden. For a few moments Leahy gave himself up for lost, and began to think over all his past life. Already the current had borne him about half a mile from the shore, and he was taking he saw that he would certainly miss the nearest point by at least thirty feet. Suddenly flashed over his mind something he had read. It was very little he ever did read, but anything about swimming he had by heart. He remembered to have seen it in a certain book that if one dives beneath a current he loses it, and can swim faster under water than above it. There was just time to try if this were true.

"Lord have mercy on me, a sinner!" thought poor Leahy, and down he went, heading for shore. He staid down as long as he could, and when he rose, oh, joy!—he found himself near the island. One look, and down he went again. Up he came, and the bank loomed almost overhead, but the terrible surface current was hur-

rying him away again. A third dive, and his outstretched hand struck a sharp coral rock. He was safe. As he rose to the surface, he caught an overwhelming mass of seaweed, clinging to a rock, and a moment later was on shore.

There was time to win the race yet. It was set to a flight of steps at the end of the island, and he ran toward them, reaching the top just as his rival came slowly climbing out of the water, whither a branch of the same current had carried him. It was a fair beat, and ended in Leahy, then and there, giving his treacherous rival a tremendous thrashing for his trick.

Now, for some time, the young corporal had no more challenges, but he did not give up swimming for all that. One morning, at sunrise, after reveille roll-call, he was walking on the beach, when he saw a large English man-of-war lying at anchor, about three miles from shore. He suddenly made up his mind that he would swim out to her, ask for some newspapers, and come back before breakfast or at least before guard-mount. This, too, when Leahy, then and there, giving his treacherous rival a tremendous thrashing for his trick.

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